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THE CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMS,

AFTER

FORTY YEARS OF PASTORAL SERVICE.

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THE CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMS,

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK:

ITS CHARACTER AND WORK, WITH THE CHANGES AROUND IT, DURING FORTY YEARS OF PASTORAL SERVICE.

A DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED NOVEMBER 14, 1886,

BY

RICHARD S. STORRS, D.D., LL.D.,

PASTOR.

A. S. BARNES & COMPANY,

NEW YORK & CHICAGO.

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DISCOURSE.

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together, for a habitation of God through the Spirit."—*Ephesians* ii: 19-22.

MY DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS:—The completion of forty years of continuous pastoral service in this church inclines my thoughts to-day, and possibly yours, with a natural impulse, toward a rapid survey of what the church has hitherto been, in its unfolding life and power, and of what it has done, or sought to do, in service to the Master. There may be nothing in such a survey of special interest or importance to others, but for us the story cannot fail of significance, and perhaps we may take incitement from it to finer, larger, and more fruitful work in the time which remains. The changes constantly occurring around us—never before so frequent or impressive in our community as in recent years—admonish us forcibly that such a sketch, by the only Pastor whom the church has yet had, should not be deferred to some other anniversary, which for him may never come. With no other feeling, therefore, than one of humility in reviewing my part in the work here done, of profound affection toward those with whom I have been associated in the church and congregation, and in their respective official boards, and of grateful praise toward Him who has blessed our common effort with the power and grace of Divine benediction, I would recall some principal facts in our church-history, with some of the characteristic traits which have marked our church-life. If I ask your attention for a longer time than is usually allotted to sermons, even when preached on special occasions, you will remember, I am sure, how wide a range the subject contemplates, how many particulars it must include, and how impossible it naturally is that another equal term of years should present itself for our common review.

This church was constituted, as a distinct Christian society, in the love of Christ, and for the furtherance of His earthly kingdom, by men who not only believed His teachings, rejoiced in His offices, and wor-

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shipped His person, but who had a tender and reverent sense of the sacredness of the Church, as essentially related to the manifestation of His life in the world. The "congregation of faithful men" was not to them a mere assembly of persons statedly meeting to listen to discourses. It was not a simple human society, for self-cultivation in ethical or philosophical knowledge, or even in religious thought, and in the graces and forces of character. It was to them, as it had been to the apostle by whom were written the words of the text, as it has been to us, the living and continuing household of Christ; knit together and quickened by faith toward Him; endowed by Him with the riches of His truth, and the treasure of His sacraments; in which He personally meets His disciples, to impart to them a heavenlier life than earth can offer; before which He opens celestial gates. Sacred fellowships with each other, a supreme and transforming consciousness of His presence, exulting and inspiring worship, with joyful service rendered to His cause—these were therefore the aims of those who felt themselves drawn by the motion of His Spirit to form this church. Every effort for it was to their apprehension an offering to Him, whom God hath set in the heavenly places to be the Head over all things to the Church. Vocal with His praise, it was to be also vital with His life. They expected it to stand, in whatsoever local independence, in essential alliance with all communions of those who love Him; and they expected it thus to stand, still testifying of Him, still pervaded by His gracious energy, and still in its measure serving the progress of His kingly cause, while generations should come and go. This tender and lofty conception of the church, with this aspiration concerning its spiritual work in the world, has been a constant moulding force in its development.

It has been constituted, from the first, of Christian families, living for the most part in near neighborhood, while brought into closer spiritual connection by their common faith in the Divine Master, and their common desire for the supreme and immortal attainments made possible by Him. Under the impulse and law of the Gospel, with the approval of kindred churches, such families were here formally associated, for common worship, with instruction and prayer, and the due celebration of Christian sacraments, for mutual helpfulness toward whatever is best in wisdom, knowledge, and holy affection, and for united Christian labors. The church has always continued to be what it thus was at first, a household-church; and the impress of the fact has been apparent in all its history.

The very location of its house of worship, in a part of the city occupied by residences, and removed from the avenues along which

passengers are carried in cars, has contributed to keep it a church of families, socially as well as religiously allied. At one time, indeed, while this house was undergoing reconstruction, we worshipped for a year in the Academy of Music, at the point where several car-lines converge, and where very large congregations were assembled, gathered from every section of the city, and including elements as diverse as possible, in respect to religious opinion and character as well as to residence, previous associations, forms of occupation, social position. That formed an interesting episode in our history which we gladly remember, for the widened opportunities which it afforded, with the happy effects which followed the exhibition of the Lord in the Gospel to wanderers and wayfarers as well as to clustered Christian households. Some of us, perhaps, would not have been sorry if a similar opportunity, though not presented by a similar occasion, had been opened to us again. But the church was intentionally planted at first as a household-church; and such it has continued to be, with whatever of limitation, with whatever of advantage, belongs to this distinctive constitution.

A certain reserve has therefore characterized it, such as used to be more common in churches than it has been of late. There has never been felt here the passion for publicity which finds the church-life most exhilarating when public mention of it is frequent; to which the church appears walking victoriously on high places when the newspapers are occupied with what is said or done within it. We have preferred to live in the privacy secured to us, and to do our work, in our special sphere, without proclamation. It has never been our wont to advertise our services, except on the rarest public occasions; and the many strangers whom we have gladly welcomed to them have come from an impulse in themselves, not as attracted by notices in the papers. I imply in this no adverse criticism on a different plan. I see, indeed, that that may have advantages. I speak only of what our own custom has been, as naturally suggested by the particular composition of the church.

The families thus associated have by no means been wholly from New England, or descendants of the Puritan stock; nor have they been such, only, as had previously been accustomed to the Congregational order or worship. English, Scotch, and German families have been as pleasantly at home in the church as have been those of American origin; so have families of the Holland lineage, or those springing from a Huguenot ancestry; families from the North of Ireland, or from Canada; from the West, the Middle States, or the South, as well as those from New England. We have had among us, and have to-day,

those born and trained in the Presbyterian Church, in either of its reunited divisions; those brought up from childhood in the Episcopal Church, in the Methodist, the Baptist, the Reformed, the Lutheran, the Unitarian, the Society of Friends, as well as those born and baptized in Congregational churches. They have dwelt together in the happiest mutual confidence and sympathy, on the common foundation of faith in the Master; and those who have come from other nationalities, or from communions remote from ours, have contributed as much as any others to the furtherance of the church, by wise counsels, liberal gifts, and an affectionate enthusiasm of spirit. To many of them, I know, this church has become as familiar a home, as fondly beloved, as if they had never known any other; and the continual variety in unity which has marked the congregation has been to it a source of strength, to him who long has ministered to it an occasion of constant refreshment and joy. Two or three, certainly, have here worshipped who had been trained in the Jesuit schools; several are now here whose early discipline was in convents.

Relatively, at least, this has been also a permanent congregation. Of course changes continually occur in times like these, and in communities like ours, where men easily move from place to place, and where very few are born in the houses in which their parents had been children. The event of death sadly and suddenly scatters households; while, aside from this, the reverses of prosperity, or rapid and large accumulations of wealth, the claims of business, new social attractions, sometimes no doubt the mere desire for novelty in environment, all contribute to multiply changes in a city-congregation; and no one notices such changes more instantly, or feels them more keenly, than does the Pastor, as familiar hands are loosened from his to grasp the unseen Hand above, or as he sees families to whom he is attached removed to other cities, or to parts of our city so remote that attendance on our services becomes impossible. How many such changes have occurred among us I need not remind you. We look in vain for many faces which used to be here, keen in attention, earnest with a resolute purpose, or suffused with joyful confidence and hope.

Yet, as compared with many congregations situated like this, in the midst of recent and mobile populations, this has been remarkably permanent. More than twenty families are represented among us which were here when I first stood in this pulpit; while the number of those who have been here for twenty or thirty years is of course vastly larger. The church has had the same clerk, the same treasurer, for nearly thirty years each. The treasurer of the Society has so long had our

finances in his kind, faithful, and punctual hands, that we hardly remember when his function began; and even the weekly care of the house in which we worship has been in charge of one officer for a quarter of a century. While, therefore, the changes in the congregation have been frequent enough to keep us from settling into ruts of routine, and to furnish all the time fresh hearers of the Word, they have not interrupted the essential continuity of the life of the church, or impaired in the least its early sense of unity in the spirit, and of grateful and happy home attachment.

There is more than beauty in such a comparative permanence of congregations. A persistent and powerful moral force comes to development with and through it. The church has its impersonal consciousness. A certain invisible spiritual force associates its members, selects its aims, directs its conclusions, prompts or limits its organized action. It cannot become a revolving mirror, to reflect the idiosyncracies of any one in the pulpit. Its influence on the Pastor is as definite and positive as is his upon it; and its essential self-propagating life will not cease to exhibit its power, and to work its effects, whatever Minister comes or goes. Such a church, with its roots in the past, and its living inspiration from the mind of the Master, need not fear to face the coming years. Its strength is inherent, not adventitious, and its history is prophetic. Walls of stone, pillars of oak, are its natural shelter, not buildings which may be moved, hither and yon, like the tents of a circus; but the permanent and diffusive force of its life will surpass in endurance both stone and oak.

That this has been also a harmonious church hardly needs to be said; and the fact has been on the one hand a fruit, on the other hand a source, of the interior continuity of its life. This harmony has by no means implied that any one in the church, whether officer or member, has always had matters adjusted to his preference. We have all of us had occasionally to yield to a general judgment adverse to our views. Nor has it implied that no subjects for discussion have been presented, disclosing sharp differences of opinion or feeling. We have had, rather, our full share of such; touching matters of the inner administration of church or society, or touching our relations to other churches, or to benevolent organizations. But frank, courteous, and ample discussion, continued sometimes through successive sessions, has always brought consent in the end on the part of a majority never, I think, on critical questions, of less than three-fourths of those voting upon them; and when such consent has been declared the minority has yielded with ready compliance. A factious minority in the church has

never existed. It is not impossible that some may have left it, at one time or another, because their wishes had been overruled, though I recall only four or five instances in which I have any reason to suppose this. But far the larger number of those whose judgment or desire had failed to control our corporate action have continued as affectionately attached to the church, and as eager for its welfare, as before such action had been taken. They have fully understood that the Christian neighbors and long-time friends with whom they here worshipped were desirous to consult the best interests of all; that while the general mind of the church must be commanding on all questions affecting its policy, there was no wish to restrain the expression of adverse opinion, or to crowd a minority into a course obnoxious to them; and that, if experience should show the inexpediency of any course of approved action, it would cheerfully be retraced. So they have uniformly acquiesced in what has been done; have borne their part in accomplishing measures to which at first they had been disinclined; and have hoped, with others, for the good results which for themselves they could scarcely anticipate, but which I think they have afterward generally admitted to be realized.

An incidental illustration of this prevalent harmony is presented by the fact that while the term of office of a Deacon in the church is limited by our rules to six years, one honored brother—a man of the strongest convictions and character, who was not unfrequently earnest in debate and inflexible in vote against measures which yet the church accepted—was continued in that office, by successive reëlections, for nearly forty years, would be in it to-day if he had not been called to go up higher; while of the present incumbents of the office each has held it since his first election, one of them for twenty-eight years, another for twenty-four. Many other churches have been larger than this, and more conspicuous. I doubt if any one can be found which has had a happier concord of feeling so long and so habitually manifest in it.

As a church of affiliated Christian households, this was not established, and it has not existed, as a centre of either doctrinal or ecclesiastical propagandism; but it has consistently honored the Faith in the acceptance of which it was founded, and the special form of organization which at the outset it adopted. A Congregational church, orthodox in doctrine while democratic in polity, was a distinct novelty here when this church began. Congregationalism was associated, in the general thought, either with Unitarian teaching, or with some variety of the then odious Perfectionist opinions. It was widely expected that this church would soon become absorbed in some established and command-

ing communion preceding it on this ground; or that, if developing on its own lines, it would take the attitude toward such communions of repellence and menace. It was frequently suggested that its Confession of Faith would not long be maintained, but that some attractive rationalizing scheme would emerge in place of it. It may not be said, perhaps, that such fears, in either direction, were then unnatural; but it may certainly, with emphasis, be said that no such fears have been justified by our history, that none such can now continue.

We have not over-valued any special form of Church-constitution. We have quite understood that no arrangement of ecclesiastical rules and rites can securely guard the inner church-life. The prelatical system, which naturally enough grew up in the Empire after the apostolic time, and which gave coherence and mutual support to the early congregations, has shown itself in history, and in its only positive modern development, in fatal sympathy with a system of doctrine which appears as unlike the majestic and tender message of the Gospels as the gilded and purpled Alpine ice is unlike the bloom of summer-gardens. Even under the careful restrictive limitations on which Protestantism insists, it hardly supplies substantive support to a distinctly evangelical teaching. It accepts and fosters the arts of beauty, in connection with its buildings; it diligently cultivates the spirit and the manner of devoutness in worship; to a certain extent it enriches ceremonial, and adds stateliness to public Church-councils; it affords, I doubt not, valuable guidance in the missionary effort of a communion; it makes the voluntary withdrawal from it of ministers or churches more difficult and convulsive; and sometimes it gives a higher prominence, a wider influence, to fine and strong character, or to generous culture, in its principal officers. But it seems unable to exclude from its pulpits either those who treat miracles as legends, the Word of God as largely the product of a human literary craft, or those on the other hand who copy the dress, emulate the manner, mimic the rites, and covet the dogmas of Roman priests. A mere ethical theism, and a carnal or mystical doctrine of grace conveyed upon sacraments, appear equally at home in the shelter of its chancels; and while, for the most part, a common ritual is maintained, within the indulgent hospitality of that ritual conflicting opinions so face each other that a stranger in one of its local congregations can scarcely be assured beforehand whether he is to meet a self-asserting philosophy of doubt, or a scheme of sacerdotal manipulation, which affronts the intelligence and scouts the Reformation, or a clear and delightful exhibition of the Gospel. "The unity of the Faith" is largely and eloquently eulogized by the system, but it is by no means guarantied.

On the other hand, it must equally be admitted that more popular forms of Church-constitution, approaching more nearly the New Testament plan, are liable also to be insidiously invaded or forcibly overswept by the insurgence of rash speculation, or by the subtler intrusion of that sceptical spirit which begins with doubt and ends with fierce and wide denial. The only real barriers against either of these must be in the intelligent and experienced faith of the body of believers. The essential church-life, undecaying, invincible to assault, can rest only on the immanent grace of the Divine Spirit. What carries disciples, churches, or communions back to that, in simple and strong reliance of the heart, is likeliest to keep them in accord with the Master, and in the perennial fellowship of the Faith.

While honoring, therefore, the scheme of Church-order which we have inherited, we have had no feud with any other. We value, for ourselves, the democratic equality of members; the open church-meetings, for important discussions; the wholly unhindered conference of minds in the weekly religious assemblies; the liberty we have in selecting and arranging our forms of worship; the careful provision for intelligent church-discipline, with the strict defenses of individual rights; the limited trusts committed to officers; and the insistence on personal leadership, resulting from character, knowledge, consecration, as the warrant and measure of ministerial privilege. More than all, we value that freedom from an extreme denominational spirit which is natural to a church which governs itself, which desires that others should govern themselves, and which has no ambition to gratify by magnifying the worth and extending the area of some elaborate external scheme. We have loved these elements and traits of our system, and have felt that they wrought beneficially with us; and we have rejoiced to aid as we could in fostering similar Church-institutions, near or afar. We have been sensitive to any discredit which might be cast on them, by what appeared the unworthy action of other churches; and when occasion required we have taken some risks, accepted some censure—which has done us no harm—through efforts to prevent or remove such discredit. But no slur or suspicion has been cast by this church on the forms of organization preferred and prevailing in other communions—the Presbyterian, the Methodist, or the Episcopal. We have frankly recognized what is excellent in them, and have seen with joy the growth and prosperity of congregations accustomed to them. Interlaced as we are with such congregations by innumerable ties, religious and social, our relations to them and to their pastors have been candid and confiding. It has been natural that they should be, since no more com-

plete contradiction can be fancied of the fundamental principle lying at the base of a church like this than would be offered by any denial of the liberty of others to associate themselves in Christian societies as they may prefer, under the general law of Christ. A partisan temper, a sharp and censorious denominational zeal, must be to us intensely inappropriate. Any one of our households might as well insist that its neighbors shall live just like itself, and dress or build in the same precise fashion. Freedom of organization for Christian congregations, in connection with any communion they select, or outside of any if they prefer, is a principle vital to our scheme of order. I have no fear that a steadfast attachment to our way of working, with this cordial respect for any other which in experience may prove itself effective, will ever here languish or fail.

While the church has continued Congregational in order, it has also remained evangelical in faith, and has shown no tendency to yield or to modify the convictions of the truth, august and transcendent, in which it was founded. We have lived side by side, in the happiest fellowship as neighbors and friends, with the families of the Unitarian church, which was here before us; we have delighted to unite with them in many large and beautiful works; and we have affectionately honored their pastors—him who already had passed middle life when I came hither, and who continues among us, venerable in a serene age, and him who succeeded him in a like earnest and honorable ministry, and whom we regret to miss henceforth from our streets and societies. But no change has occurred in our Faith, bringing it to a closer correspondence with theirs; while it has equally remained unaffected by any one of the fugitive opinions which during our time have taken and lost in the public thought a transitory prominence. Our Confession of Faith remains what it was; and the practical power of the system of doctrine articulated in it, for both Minister and people, is as positive as ever.

The impression not unfrequently obtains that men and women of cultivated minds, and of agreeable social surroundings, are losing the hold which their fathers had upon the peculiar truths of the Gospel, and are substituting for them some one or other of the shifting schemes of rationalizing thought which are always in the air. But certainly such tendencies, if existing among us, have been singularly inert. We have had our full proportion, always, of those generously trained in seminaries, colleges, and the higher professional schools, at home and abroad. Between two and three hundred men so educated have been personally known to me as attendants on our worship, the majority of them as communicants in the church, many of them being in it to-day. They

have been lawyers, judges, physicians, editors, authors, teachers, bankers, engineers, merchants, with occasionally retired ministers, of our communion or of others. At the same time among the cultivated women, who have also had the special advantage of a generous education, have been writers, artists, teachers, as well as honored maidens and matrons. I by no means imply that all of these, whether men or women, have held with clear and full conviction the doctrine here maintained and taught. I know that there have been distinct exceptions. But it is due to the truth to say that if any have been drawn toward attractive speculations diverging from our governing Faith, it has been with pain rather than with pride; that they have made no attempt whatever to unsettle the convictions of those around them; and that most of those who might have been expected to feel themselves fettered by any limitation on the widest wanderings of thought have been as firm in their allegiance to the truth here set forth as have been disciples less cultured and alert. The Faith itself, as declared by the church, has suffered no change.

The Divine authority of the Lord Jesus Christ has been from the first its sovereign element; with the connected Divine authority of the Scriptures through which He is declared to the world. With the human nature which plainly appears in Him we see united the essential personal nature of God, in a true and transcendent Incarnation. What He declares is, therefore, for us the ultimate truth in the sphere of religion. His precepts present for our minds the universal and eternal ethical law. Through His smiles and tears, His condemnation of evil, His sympathy with grief, His desire for human purity and peace, His beneficent action, the heart of the Infinite is manifest to us. In His work of Redemption, consummated in His death, by the blood which was shed for the remission of sins, by the life which was given for the life of the world, the Divine compassions—rising to the climax of stupendous self-sacrifice—are set before us, in intimate coincidence with immaculate holiness. The sinfulness of man's nature, with the doom he has incurred, are terrifically illustrated in this unparallelled intervention from on high, which was the condition of his forgiveness. On the other hand, the immortal possibilities of the soul, for character and power, are sublimely suggested by the incalculable offering of Himself, which He who knew that soul to the centre was ready to make on its behalf. The Resurrection, the Ascension, and the present celestial Kingship of the Lord, are only in the line, and on the majestic inaccessible level, of all the associated facts of His life; and to us they are as certain as are stars in the sky. That His promise has been fulfilled in

the gift of the grace of the Divine Spirit, to awaken, renew, and bring men to blessed fellowship with Himself, is a fact of which we are certified by observation, are certified, I trust, by our happy experience. We accept His statement of the Judgment to come, following death, at which He will preside, with the fair and clear discriminations of character there to be made, and with the results of recompense or reward for which Eternity is to offer the sphere. That God had a purpose, from the outset of history, concerning this astonishing mission of His Son, we cannot doubt; nor that that purpose now contemplates the effect of it in the world, on persons and on peoples. That He who yielded Himself to the Cross, and thereafter arose to the skies, is to bring His Kingdom of righteousness and peace to final and glorious consummation on earth, we are joyfully assured; and equally that in supernal realms of light and triumph, to which He has ascended, a home is prepared for the humblest and the weakest who follow Him in faith.

This Gospel of the Christ stands apart, to our thought, from every scheme of philosophy or ethics, from any human scheme of Religion. We accept it as coming from the mind and will which fashioned the heavens, and which here have interposed to give direct and inestimable light on matters of immortal concern. If any one asks, "Do you fully comprehend the marvellous facts which you thus affirm?" we cheerfully answer, "Certainly not; any more than we understand life, or mind, the power of the will, or the secret of sunbeams; but we gladly accept them, on what to us is the clear and sure witness of God." If any one asks, "Are you not staggered, in the faculty of believing, by the story of Miracles?" our reply is immediate, "Certainly not; since we recognize in them a Divine power, intervening in history, on an adequate occasion, for a purpose as sublime as are the amazing means employed; and we can no more set limits to that power than we can count the moments of Eternity." Miracles, from God, are intrinsically as credible as is the poem or the picture to which genius gives birth, but which we cannot rival. The only questions which appear to us pertinent concern the ends which they subserve, with the testimony offered for them. Or, if we are asked, "How the Father can be Divine, the Son Divine, and the Spirit Divine, and yet but one God fill the immensities?" our answer is, that the mystery only enhances to our thought the Infinite Glory, and opens into brighter depths the wonders of that exalted state where what we cannot know on earth shall be revealed to illuminated minds and purified hearts.

The mystery in any of the truths of the Gospel is not for us a bar to believing. It is rather an encouragement to such belief; since we do

not expect to comprehend God, or to learn from Him what is simply commonplace. In accepting such truths we are gratefully conscious of an immediate intellectual contact with the spiritual sphere. From realms inaccessible to lenses or calculations descend upon our minds these high instructions. We seem to ourselves to communicate with the soul from which ours have sprung, and before which extend the shining expanses of truth and of life. The earth becomes sacred, because such revelations have opened above it celestial prospects. The order of history takes its vivid interpretation from the Divine mission central in it; while the premonitions of glory or of gloom which are shot upon responsive spirits from the coming Immortality add solemnity to our worship, and the supreme intensity to our life.

We have been conscious of no burden whatever, and of no confining limitations, in connection with our assured conviction of these primordial and superlative truths. The conviction has been imposed upon us by no outward authority. We have not even been held to it by pleasant affiliations with a wide communion, from which we did not wish to withdraw. It has been our conviction because study and prayer, interpreting the Scriptures, have brought us to it; because it corresponds with whatever is loftiest in those aspirations which lift us toward God; because in the sternest crises of life its voice to us has rung as with the cheer of heavenly trumpets; because we have found in it the profound and sovereign joy of our souls. Christianity would be the perpetual and unparallelled romance of the world if it were not its most authoritative doctrine, its supremely illuminating history. In their duller secular moods it may doubtless seem to men distant and strange, almost unreal. But in the higher spiritual states of feeling and thought it brings its own evidence, intrinsic and commanding, in its absolute fitness to what is most tender and deep in desire, most exalted in hope, most affectionate and exulting in our consciousness of God.

Nor has our conviction detained us from any excursions of thought, in which the aspiring mental force might fruitfully work or playfully disport. I know of no congregation in which minds have been more open than in this to whatever light science can give, or philosophy, or history, on the themes of chiefest interest to man. I do not think that you ever have felt that the pulpit has been narrow in its range, imperious in its tone, or averse to considering whatever the greater minds of the world have thought and taught. I have not been prodigal of historical or philosophical discussion. I have wished to present the results of thinking, rather than the processes; the gathered metal, instead of the lumps of earth and stone in which it had been lodged. But it has been

part of the business of my life to investigate as widely and impartially as I could whatever movements, of action or thought, have had Christian significance; and there are not many of them which have not at some time here been traced. But nothing in all this has tended to unsettle our faith in the Gospel, or to prompt us to displace it for recent ambitious and showy speculations. On the contrary, the very variety of our studies has shown us that often what has called itself light has been but a deceptive glitter, born of decay; that there are temporary fashions in thought, as there are in dress, or in the building of houses; that opinions which loom like the mass of continents turn out, not unfrequently, to be vanishing mists; and that even the path leading to heaven, which the Master opens, and in which the humble may joyfully walk, may be hidden, as it has been, by fantastic speculations which one age produced and the next age forgot.

While ready, therefore, to welcome instruction from any quarter, we have not gone forth on restless quests after new theories. It seems to us a temperate belief, warranted by the Bible, and simply just to the Author of that, that in religion as in science the supreme facts are fixed, and that we have only to adjust our minds to them. If the essential meaning of the Gospel is not evident in the Scriptures, and has not been sufficiently illustrated in the vast experience and the intense many-sided discussion of Christian centuries, it is idle to hope for certainty about it. Yet in such certainty is the spring of whatever is noblest in action, or finest and divinest in achievements of character. While, therefore, attachment to the centre of certainties has left us free for untrammelled speculation on themes which the certainties do not cover—no more manacled by our confidence than the astronomer is by his assurance that the sun is a globe of substance and fire, not a painted balloon, or than the geographer is by his conviction that the continents of the earth are not mere fringes of floating foam—we have not suffered from that vagrancy of mind which hates, constitutionally, to rest in conclusions; to which everything grandest and most serious in the universe remains a moot question; which is only conscious of gladness and force when in unguided motion along dim and perilous tracks of thought; and which is almost certain to bring up at last, where Paul says that in his time some found their conclusion, in a "vain jangling," "understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm."

We prefer the old doctrine, which came with prelude of heavenly song, which He who is The Truth declared, which conquered the ancient Pagan society as sunshine conquers the fierceness of frost, which has blessed the earth, wherever it has touched it, as only a force from

heaven could, and which comes to us commended by successions of illustrious lives, as well as by the memories of fathers and mothers whose hearts it had uplifted, whose personal action it had nobly inspired. A world like ours—which is not made up, either physically or morally, of garden and greensward, but in both its departments is rugged with granite, pestilent with morasses, swept by storm-winds, embosoming fire—needs such a religion, of grace and of marvel, with the thunder of Divine authority in its tones. Blessed be God that for ages it has had it! that a church even as recent as this is knit by its Faith in vital connection with the churches which apostles planted and watched! A dignity descends on its young life from beliefs sublimely honored aforetime by confessors and martyrs. It is spiritually united, according to our conception of things, with the ever-expanding Communion of Saints, waiting on earth, triumphant on high; even with angelic spirits of light, who see in the mission of the Lord of the Gospel, more than in creation, the lovely and holy mystery of God. No uncertain order of historical occurrences, no imperfect apparent equivalence of forms, could unite us in a fellowship so vital and prophetic with multitudinous fraternities of beautiful souls. Until the entire life of the church has essentially failed, this Faith which it has honored can no more lose the place of preëminence in it than the substance of the walls within which it worships can be resolved into painted glass or perishable tissues.

It is related in the memoirs of Bartoli, one of the distinguished Italian antiquarians, that when excavations were made at Rome on the Palatine Hill, at about the middle of the seventeenth century, under the pontificate of Innocent Tenth, a chamber was found lined with a brilliant gold brocade, whose rich splendor almost dazzled the eye, but which faded as sunlight streamed upon it, till the fascinating brilliance had entirely disappeared. An apartment near this was found lined with silver; and another, covered with sheets of lead. The silver was eagerly stripped from the walls; the lead was left. But when after a time the lead was removed, unsuspected riches of coined gold were found securely lodged behind and hidden by it. A fair image seems here presented of the difference between theories which superficially attract and transiently dazzle, or schemes of opinion which have a value but not the highest, and that mystery of the Gospel which behind a common and sober aspect conceals inestimable riches of truth and of heavenly promise. These riches we have assiduously sought. I trust, in some measure, their wealths we have found.

Of the general character of the public teaching which has here been familiar it is not proper for me to speak, except as a few words may be

permitted concerning its governing aim and method. Of course, with our conception of the Gospel, of the Lord whom it presents, and of the essential transformation to be wrought by Him in the spirit of man, forensic teaching is not the chief means of building up among men the kingdom of Christ. There is a common priesthood of believers, which is to be especially exemplified in the Pastor, by which spiritual impression passes in radiation from one to another, and a soul which is filled with the life of the Master communicates that, in immediate effluence, to others whose centres of life it touches. However one may question the rites and rules of an earthly organization arrogating to the Minister the priestly preëminence which prelacy offers, he may and he must fulfill his duty to those who give him "the cure of souls" by such direct mediation for Christ. The pastoral office has in this its perpetual significance. The supremacy of character over learning or eloquence in the clerical equipment becomes self-evident. Courage, patience, gentleness, reverence, affectionateness of temper, habitual converse with things unseen, these are more needful to any Minister than scholarship, logic, or an educated taste. In the masterful and diffusive energy of faith, pervading his life, is the secret and measure of his success. His first duty is to keep his own soul in instant and happy alliance with the Lord, that he may sympathetically transmit to others the gracious and elevating force which he gains. If he fails in this, the failure is vital, and nothing else can compensate for it. But with this is also closely associated the office of systematic public instruction; and how this has here been managed I may briefly remind you.

It is certainly not a trifling task to stand week by week, for forty years, in the presence of a numerous and cultured congregation, and to speak, without conscious or frequent repetition, on subjects not always of equal importance, but always lying within the sphere of philosophical or practical religion. In so prolonged a ministry to one people there is danger of an increasing monotony in forms of expression, and in the customary modes of exhibiting subjects, with a greater danger of monotonous recurrence of favorite themes. Against the first danger I guarded myself, as far as I could, when twenty years since I substituted sermons prepared with care, but carefully unwritten, for the manuscript sermons which before I had used. This was not the result of a wish to save labor—it has never done that; but of a desire to make public discourse more natural, free, and flexibly vigorous, less literary in tone, more direct and energetic. Imperfect as the success has been, it has been sufficient, to my apprehension, to justify the change. Against the second danger, of limitation in range

of thought, the congregation made watchful provision when it arranged the Pastor's Study as a permanent part of its house of worship, and when, subsequently, without solicitation, it laid the foundation of a Pastoral Library, to which annual appropriations have since been made, and which has become a rich collection of valuable books, in various languages, especially helpful to the study of the Scriptures, or of those significant developments in history which illustrate the progress of the kingdom of God. The plan of teaching thus suggested it has been my aim, though with an imperfection which no one can have seen more clearly than myself, to carry out.

I have always had in view a various instruction, for myself as for you, proceeding through years, rather than any rapid succession of startling appeals, such as might have been appropriate in a promiscuous and unstable congregation; an instruction, too, on themes pertaining to the spiritual life, rather than on matters of temporary interest, which may be more aptly and sufficiently treated on platforms or in journals.

I may perhaps fairly say, with the assurance of your assent, that the primary and inspiring aim of this ministry has been to set distinctly before you the Son of God, in His tenderness and His majesty, His unique personality, His supreme offices, His welcoming invitations, in His proper lordship over the world, and in that glory with the Father to which He ascended, and into which He receives those who follow Him in faith. This general purpose has practically subordinated all things to itself, and has given to the preaching its motive and rule. Of course, in the protracted and passionate debate on African Slavery this pulpit was not silent, conceiving that question to belong to Christianity, not only or chiefly to secular statesmanship. In the storm and stress of the Civil War, it was needful that constant succors be ministered to spirits which would have felt too deeply the scathe and scar of the fiery contest, unless protected by confidence in Him to whose sublime plans for the welfare of the world the victory of Liberty appeared indispensable. In the presence, too, of great tragic events—the conflagration of cities, the swoop of pestilence, the assassination of Presidents, the death of men illustrious in our history—the discussions of the pulpit have followed, while seeking to elevate and enlighten, the thought of all minds. But, in general, the public teaching here has been limited to themes of a spiritual significance, especially to the person and the offices of Christ, and to the nature and immortal effects of the faith which associates the soul with Him. It has been felt that herein lies the power to bless men, and to lift them toward God; not in the realms of philosophical discussion, or amid the wide outlying spaces of archæological inquiry, or

on any chance lines of eccentric thought. The written Word, setting forth in fullness the living Word, that is the power of God to salvation; though no one can know so fully as does he who tries to exhibit it how true are the lines of George Herbert,—

> "Oh, that I knew how all thy lights combine,
> And the configurations of their glory!
> Seeing not only how each verse doth shine,
> But all the constellations of the story!"

Even the ethical and political questions which constantly challenge public attention have not here been largely treated. This has not been accidental, but the fruit of a distinct intention. If any things are plain on the face of the New Testament this seems to be among them, that neither the Lord nor His apostles entered as disputants into the political arena of their time, or undertook, by particular precepts, to control and direct the action of disciples in secular affairs. A thousand questions of personal practice, in regard to amusements, social customs, business occupations, the household life, the duties of men in their public relations, were as prominent then, and in the centuries which immediately followed, as they have been since; and a sentence from the Master, or from either apostle, upon such questions, would have saved prolonged and perplexing debate. But the sentence was not spoken. They insist upon the duties of chastity, temperance, honesty, industry, fidelity to obligations, abstinence from impure associations with the world, a systematic effort for holiness in the spirit; but beyond this their plan is to push the impression of celestial realities, and of man's need of transfiguring grace, into the intimate conviction of men; to bring them thus to penitent faith, to heavenly hopes, and to a conscious fellowship with the Lord; and then to leave the new moral life, so quickened and instructed, to work itself out, in individual expression, in their several social relations and activities. The ground rule is always the same: "If thine eye be single, thy whole body will be full of light." The end aimed at is always the same: "That ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light." I conceive this method the true one, lying, in fact, at the foundation of personal moral education, and of Christian civilization; and while I have always exercised the right of free election and unfettered action, in matters of civic or social concern, I have left others as free as myself, and have not sought to use the pulpit for furthering my particular opinions. I am utterly certain that the one thing essential to a just and noble conduct of life, such as honors the Lord, and prepares for a career on higher levels, is the sense in men of the greatness of

Immortality, of the glory of Christ, and of their personal relationship to Him as Saviour and Judge. Whatever commends itself to the believing and loving heart, under this illumination, cannot offend the law of the Spirit. To substitute for it any precise rubrical code of mandatory maxims does equal dishonor to the servant and to the Lord.

Even on themes touching directly the spiritual life, I have felt that a congregation constituted like this needed thoughtful suggestion, with the persuasions of careful argument, quite as much as any immediate stress of appeal. Archbishop Whately has forcibly said that the appeal of a discourse is to its argument what the edge of a sabre is to its back. If the blade is all edge, it will break at a stroke; if all back, the blunt weapon will bruise but not cut. This fairly applies to the structure of a sermon; and while earnest exhortation has not, I am sure, been wanting here, I have desired to make no appeal which had not been justified by a fair and sufficient intellectual process. Perhaps I have erred in seeking too uniformly to enlist the judgment before attempting to animate feeling. I wholly agree with what Mr. Longfellow once said: "To me a sermon is no sermon in which I cannot hear the heart beat;" as I also agree with the remark of another, which he quoted with approval, that "it is useless to apply the reasoning faculties to things beyond their jurisdiction, in the realm of the affections." But the general tone of the teaching here has seemed properly indicated by the character of the church, as a permanent assembly of associated cultured Christian households. It has not had it for its aim to silence the gainsaying, to rebuke the blaspheming, or to startle the ribald assailant of the Gospel. It has been educational, more than hortatory; an appeal to the moral reason of men, and to their capacity for spiritual affection, rather than to their excited sensibilities. Variety has been sought, in theme and treatment, rather than intensity of particular appeal. The tone of the pulpit has been one, I trust, of affirmative conviction, with an eager desire for the welfare of men, and the honor of the Lord; but it has not been, as it well might have been in a different environment, of rebuking remonstrance, of sharp invective against offensive opinions, or of continually exciting admonition.

The tone of Christian feeling prevailing in the church has been appropriate to the Faith which it has honored, and to the general character of the teaching through which that Faith has been set forth. While characteristically cheerful and hopeful, confident and courageous, rather thoughtful than sentimental, rather strong in purpose than quick in emotion, it has been also sympathetic, energetic, often impassioned, always intelligently and adoringly devout. I speak of it with assurance,

because I have watched it so many years. There have been times in our history when fervor of feeling rose to intensity, and when the swing of an impulsive enthusiasm was in all the religious activity of the church. We have only to regret that such seasons have not been more frequent, that such states of feeling have not been permanent. There have been individuals among us, often, in whom the sorrowful sense of sin, justified by their view of the Divine holiness, has pierced and transfixed the sensitive spirit, making it for the time wholly incapable of confident hope; and there have been others in whom a certain mystical rapture—what they felt to be a miraculous peace—has followed grief, preceded great duty, become the incentive to great endurance, or the reward of supreme consecration. Sometimes, especially at the sacrament, the very air of the church has seemed charged with an influence from the unmeasured majesty, from the beauty beyond thought, of worlds unseen. It has seemed to us then as if the rush of angelic plumes were not far off; as if gleams were shot upon our faces from gates of pearl.

But in general the tone of feeling here has been, as I have said, if not always intense, yet not, on the other hand, inert or intermittent. It has been liberal, conscientious, resolute, hopeful; with its penitence suffused by the light of the promises; its enterprise inspired by the sense of accordance with a Divine plan; its affection exalted by the clear apprehension of the sacrifice of the Lord; its quietness of spirit replenished by assurance of His supremacy. The temper which counts service a joy has been combined in it with the sweet expectation which finds the coming celestial felicities predicted in the heart, as well as foreshadowed in the images of prophecy, and sublimely foretold by the Cross. "I like the vital restfulness of this church," a lady said to me years ago, who had recently come to it: "I seem, when I worship here, to be girt about by invisible helps, with the spirit braced on eternal realities." "I go from the church," many have said, "feeling more distinctly my immortal relations, with life more noble and sacred than before." I have felt the same influence often present, in private as well as in public ministrations. It has faced me amid scenes as startling and sad as one ever meets on the pages of romance. It has been an elixir of life to the weak, and has conquered and dispersed the shadows of death. Radiant and memorable has been its expression on the faces of those who across the crumbling edges of time were looking to the Immensities, wherein the Lord, sovereign and tender, seemed to rise before them in palpable presence. There have been emergencies in not a few lives, of those present or gone, where nothing could have helped except the religion here familiar. There are rooms in the city in which

has appeared an almost visible glory, as from shining salients pushed forth in front of heavenly walls. If any one has needed a fresh illustration of the power of the Gospel, under God's grace, to inspire and nurture a spiritual life distinct from anything which society produces, or which learning, ethics, and art inspire, I cannot but feel that here it has been offered.

A church constituted like this, and free for any action which may tend to invigorate and enrich its church-life, has naturally made its Order of Worship represent its own judgment as to what for it would be happiest and best. Without haste, but with the timely and plastic touch of an intelligent choice, it has shaped and expanded this, till, without departing essentially or largely from that adopted in other churches of a non-prelatical constitution, the social element takes an increased prominence in it, and the office of worship becomes one of common concern and attractive dignity, not a mere incident to the preaching of sermons.

No prescribed forms of prayer have been used among us, except as the prayer of General Supplication is closed with the Lord's Prayer, in which the congregation audibly unites. Even this seemed at first, to some who had been bred in the Puritan traditions, an innovation of a questionable nature. But a general feeling, reverent and resolute, insisted upon it, more than twenty years since. The responsive reading of the Psalms, at each service, by the Pastor and the people, was associated with this; and, at a later time, the recital together of the Apostles' Creed. The Gloria Patri, which follows the Creed, appropriately closes the opening worship, which is exclusively of prayer and praise, with the direct Divine instruction conveyed by a lesson from the Scripture. The sermon which is to follow is preceded by a hymn sung by the choir as a prelude to it, not by the congregation as an act of praise. In rendering this hymn the choir has a ministerial office, peculiar to itself, of inspiring power, and of delightful significance. When sung with tenderness or majestic force, to music sympathetically selected or arranged, such a hymn has had often a memorable effect, touching the heart with the pathos of penitence, or with glad aspiration, sometimes opening the heavens more clearly before us, through distincter vision of the Lord on His throne, and of the great Immortality. I have been consciously animated by it to speak to congregations into whose minds it had put a fine and powerful impulse. With devout feeling matching and crowning its musical culture, a choir has power, by such a service, to illuminate and impress the following sermon, perhaps beyond its own conception. Worthily performed, its office, on the earthly levels, is like that of the shining ministering spirits who stand

before God, and who go from His presence on wings whose every beat is music, to speak glad tidings to the Church and the World.

Aside from this choir-hymn, giving musical rendering to a theme or feeling prelusive to the sermon, and aside from an opening anthem in the evening, the singing of the church is a popular service, led by the choir, from the Doxology with which it commences, to the evening Doxology with which it concludes. In the evening, after the reading of the Psalter, a chant takes the place of the Creed; but it is one of a brief series of permanent chants, sung to appropriate ecclesiastical music, in which the assembled worshippers unite. It is never intended for artistic display, or to serve as the vehicle of musical novelties.

The changes thus gradually made have not been designed, as they are not adapted, to make our worship more ornamental, or more agreeable to an importunate esthetic taste. On the other hand, each particular of change has been subordinated to the constant purpose of making the worship more reverent and sympathetic, and of engaging the largest number to take personal part in it. Of course, the changes have not been designed to assimilate our mode of worship to that obtaining in any communion using a liturgy; for to this, also, they are not adapted. We are not insensible to the various excellences of the Anglican liturgy: its venerable associations, its rhythmic forms, the majestic cadences of its prayer and praise, the suggestions and incentives of devout feeling infolded in phrases some of which it transports from the age of the Catacombs. Familiarity with it is part of our English inheritance; and we quite understand, if we do not share, the affectionate regard for it of those who would nowise give it up, though they anxiously desire to make it more flexible, and to add richness to it. But for ourselves we, as a body, distinctly prefer a form of worship in which prayer shall be free, offered by the Minister "according to his ability," as it was in the day of Justin Martyr, uttering directly the heart of the speaker to Him who heareth, and carrying up the hearts of others on the fervent pleading of personal desire; yet in which, also, the social element shall have its proper and permanent place, children taking part in it with their parents, and the assembled Christian households, united in faith, and in the service of grateful adoration, lifting spirit and voice in common praise. The flower is no more truly determined, in form and fragrance, by the seed from which it springs, than is our particular Order of Worship by the social and spiritual character and culture of the church which has shaped it. If it should ever be further modified, this will certainly be done under the same controlling law. It is gratifying to see how surely and widely a similar spirit in

other churches is working itself into similar expression. In this, as in all departments of life, the variety and richness of diversified unity are the natural fruit of intelligent freedom.

It is another tendency natural to a church constituted like this, and developed along its special lines, to attach peculiar tenderness and sacredness to the Baptism of children, to invest this with forms of a gracious solemnity, and to follow it with a service, separate from itself, yet allied and supplemental. The days on which the rite is administered are those on which, at a later hour, the Lord's Supper is celebrated. The initial rite has its proper place in the front of the Morning Service, succeeding directly the Invocation. While the parents, with their children, are assembling at the font, organ and choir fill the church with a welcoming chant. Before the baptism a public Covenant is accepted by the parents, with God and with the Church, pledging them to train the children whom they present in the knowledge of Christ, and for His glory. After the baptism, and the following prayer, a closing chant is sung by the choir, as the parents withdraw. The name of each child, with the date of its birth, the date of its baptism, and with the names of its parents, is permanently recorded on the Register of the church.

So far, no doubt, the service in substance corresponds with that observed in other churches, our only aim being to make as distinct and impressive as we may the import and the promise, the sweetness and the dignity, which belong to the rite. But when the children so baptized have reached the age of seven years, they are met by an additional service, arranged specially for them, to remind them that the church holds them in its remembrance and its affectionate hope, and that it desires to open before them, plainly and fully, the Way of Life. On the opening Sunday of each new year those who during the preceding year have passed from infancy into childhood are again assembled, around the font at which they were baptized, and each receives from the hand of the Pastor a copy of the Scriptures, in a beautiful and complete English edition, presented to it on behalf of the church. On the cover this bears the inscription, "The Church of the Pilgrims, to a Child of the Covenant." On the inside the name of the child is written, with the date of its birth, the date of its baptism, and the signature of the Pastor. After the Bibles have been distributed, with a flower-token to every child, a prayer is offered,—of thanksgiving for the continued life of those thus reassembled, of renewed consecration of each of them to the Lord, with supplication for His blessing upon them, upon the households from which they come, and upon the church to which they are bound by sacred ties, and with tender remembrance of

those before whose tearful eyes the occasion brings up the vanished forms of children similarly consecrated as babes, and already gone to be with the saints. The Pastor, for the church, greets each child "with a holy kiss;" and after the benediction they are again dispersed to their places, in the joyful expectation that they will stand, in after years, in an equal group, before the Table of the Lord, and finally at His Marriage Supper.

I know that we shall unite in saying that no service known among us is more delightful or impressive than this; and certainly no copies of the Bible, in the hands of the young, or of those who having received them in childhood still retain them in middle life, are more fondly prized or more affectionately used. In not a few instances a child dying in faith and hope has wished the last words read in its hearing, or read by its coffin, to be read from its beloved "Church Bible." I only wonder that the custom observed here for many years, and which will here be as permanent as the church, has not been elsewhere and widely adopted.

It is only natural that this care for the children nurtured in our households should extend to the Sunday School, and provide therein for their assiduous Christian training. It has sometimes been the fact, it may be still in some congregations, that the Sunday School is in a large measure independent of the church, having rules, officers, and methods of its own, with a distinctly self-centred life which repels instead of inviting or welcoming church-supervision. I have no present criticism to make upon such an arrangement. I speak of it only to emphasize the difference in the relations with which we are familiar between the church and the school. Here, the teaching body is simply the church itself, acting through selected representative members, to assist parents in training the young in spiritual things. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent must, by our rules, be members of the church, who have previously had experience in the school; they can be designated only by those, also members of the church, who have been associated with them in teaching; and this primary election is not valid until confirmed by the church, at its annual meeting. The school, by its constitution, is under the constant oversight of the church, with more of responsibility committed to the Pastor in connection with its work than he has always been able to meet. Its reports are annually presented to the church, and become a part of its permanent records.

It has thus come to pass that the officers of the school have uniformly been of the most honored and beloved in the church; that the beautiful, commodious, and stately home-chapel appropriated to it has

been emphatically the Children's Church; and that many have come from it, and are all the time coming, to sit with us at the holy Lord's Supper. The home-school of a church like this can never be remarkable for numbers. It has no adjacent mission-field. Its range is limited to the circuit of the parish; and the number of households embraced in this, living in convenient proximity to the church, and including young children, is not in the nature of the case very large. Numbers, too, pass out of the school, year by year, to chapel or mission, to take on themselves the work of teaching, leaving places not always at once supplied. The schools which reckon their pupils by thousands would therefore think ours, with an average of perhaps three hundred members, extremely small. But what we aim at, and feel for us to be indispensable, is that the spiritual life of the church shall pervade and animate the school, while the school, on the other hand, shall refresh, replenish, and continue that life, adding to our membership, while adding all the time to the knowledge, faith, and fervor of the church. I gladly testify that in a measure very gratifying certainly, if not unusual, these effects have here been attained. Scholars have found, as well as teachers, that

> "Sundays the pillars are
> On which Heaven's palace archèd lies."

Those Sundays have been made lovelier to their hearts by the sweet and gracious instruction which has met them, in things Divine; and into many households, as into my own, has come an influence, beautiful and strong, from the teaching and prayer, and the jubilant praise, of the Sunday School chapel. The church of the future is there being all the time trained and moulded by the church of the present, to follow, and I trust to surpass it.

A few words may not be improper upon the social character of the church. Composed as it is of Christian households, associated through their faith in the Master, by their purpose to serve Him, and their desire to rise through Him into a nobler spiritual life, it ought to be pervaded by social sympathies quick and constant, knitting all in delightful union, and growing more intimate as the years pass on. In a measure such natural expectations have been realized here, if not in any ideal completeness. We may hope that they point to a yet more full and charming development, to be reached by and by.

Undoubtedly, if any have come to us, as some perhaps did come in our earlier history, expecting an instant effervescence of welcome, as to those whose aid was imminently needed, they have been disappointed, and may have felt that the spirit of the church was indifferent and cool.

I am sadly aware, too, that excellent families who have tarried with us perhaps for years, but who have taken no personal part in our social reunions, or in the interior activities of the church, have felt something of reserve in its temper and tone, and have missed the subtile and cordial sympathies for which they had looked. Nor do I by any means imply that we have been without fault in this. We live in an incessant hurry of affairs, at a centre upon which converge the lines of continental enterprise, amid the unceasing and imperious demands of business and society. It is not easy to know, personally, all whom we should be glad to know; while the intimate affiliations of sympathizing minds must always be personal, not official, the spontaneous fruit of mutual acquaintance, not the purposed result of a conscious effort. The very permanence of such a congregation involves a danger, limiting or menacing at just this point the richest development of the common church-life. Families long associated in it become by degrees so affectionately allied, and so content in their happy relations, that they fail to reach out as promptly as they should to welcome others to a fellowship as complete. It is not pride, or a selfish exclusiveness, which detains them from this, so much as an undefined passiveness of temper, which has found its own rest in pleasant companionships, and which now expects others, without hindrance or help, to do the same. It is by no means a beautiful spirit, or one befitting a Christian church; but it easily grows up, without purpose or notice, in a congregation of many years standing, whose position is secure, whose means are equal to its needs, and most of whose families have known each other long. After an interval it gives way; but in that interval those who have come from villages or cities where their social relations had been wide and delightful, reaching back very likely to their earliest remembrance, have easily felt themselves sojourners and strangers, parted from an old home, with no new one to greet them.

But if they have continued with us, and not holding themselves shyly aloof have sought the opportunities for acquaintanceship and friendship constantly presented in our religious and social assemblies, in the Chapel-school, the Home-school, the Young People's meetings, or other organizations for counsel and work, I hazard nothing in saying that they have found themselves embosomed ere long in a welcoming regard most genial and sympathetic. They have often, I know, been themselves surprised at the readiness, even eagerness, with which the congregation has expanded its fellowship to infold them as closely as if they had been of it from the beginning. And the fellowship has not been in form and in name, but the outreach of glad and saluting confi-

dence. I know of no congregation where the spirit has prevailed more consistently than here, of affectionate thoughtfulness for those joined with us in worship and work, of earnest solicitude when sickness has threatened any of our families, of heartiest sympathy when grief has come. Your consciousness, I am sure, will in this respond to mine. I have oftentimes been freshly and delightfully reminded of the fact when those who had been here only for a time, and then had left for residence elsewhere, have spoken to me, or have sent me word, of the loving remembrance in which they continued to hold the church, for the happy fellowships which in it they had found, and the spiritual help which those fellowships had brought. Nor do I think that this experience has been at any time more general or spontaneous than it is at this hour.

I have spoken thus far, as it has seemed fit that I should, only of the inner life of the church, as that has appeared to those immediately familiar with it. The work attempted, and in a measure accomplished by it, in its outward activities, we may also properly recall. We have not lived a cloistered life. We have not been disproportionately absorbed in high meditation, or in devout revery. The pressure of the Gospel has been always upon us, prompting to immediate practical usefulness; and while we have done nothing the remembrance of which should stimulate pride, we may, I think, with manifold reason, offer praises to God for the opportunities opened before us, and for the measure of power and consecration with which we have been enabled to use them.

A church composed of Christian households, neighboring in residence, and touched by one impulse from the Master, must naturally be interested, actively and largely, in what concerns the prosperity of the city in the midst of which its life goes on; especially in what tends to foster and further the liberal, humane, and religious institutions appearing in the city, and to advance its generous culture. Such an interest has been shown by this church with unabating and liberal vigor, since my acquaintance with it began. It has not been in preëminent degree a wealthy church, though most of the families associated in it have been prosperous in affairs, and it always has embraced some families of wealth. But the duty of usefulness has had general recognition, and the gifts proceeding from the congregation for the promotion of public interests have been constant and large. In its singularly rapid and wide expansion the city has needed, more than most, large outlays of money, as well as the push of a foreseeing and liberal enterprise, to make its institutions keep abreast with the times. It is pleasant to remember that in both forms of aid, financial and moral, we have done our full part.

The only institutions here, of a literary or philanthropic character, when my acquaintance with Brooklyn began, were the small and recent Orphan Asylum, then on Cumberland street, the City Hospital, which had an act of incorporation but nothing besides, the Association for improving the condition of the Poor, still in its infancy, the Brooklyn Institute on Washington street, which had no promising pecuniary basis, and the Female Academy, which had been opened a few months before. Only a small nucleus of a library, for the use of subscribers, existed in the city. The City Bible Society had scarcely a name to live; the Sunday School Union, which now includes nearly a hundred and fifty schools in our part of the city, with more than sixty thousand teachers and scholars, was apparently not strong enough then to preserve its own records; and what has been since the prosperous and efficient City Mission Society was a changing company of individual Christians volunteering year by year to distribute tracts. It had no legal organization, was limited in effort, faint in courage, always in debt. Its entire revenue for the year preceding the beginning of this pastorate was $113.

The changes which have since been accomplished you have seen; and the record of them is one in which all who have had a part in securing them may well take pleasure. You know how the Orphan Asylum, in its better location, has been splendidly housed in its new building—a superb Cathedral of charity—and how it is being not only sustained in its continually expanding work, but is being slowly but surely endowed; how the City Hospital has unfolded into a great institution, with ample equipment of modern appliances; how the Association for the relief of the Poor has secured its commodious building, with its abundant annual revenue; and how the burned Female Academy rose from its ashes, into the ampler accommodation and the statelier beauty of the Packer Institute, known and honored throughout the land. You know, too, how other kindred institutions have been added to these, with a rapidity constantly surprising, yet in a strength which justifies glad admiration and hope. The Long Island College Hospital, the Homeopathic Hospital, the Eye and Ear Hospital, have been among these. The Methodist Hospital, to which a public-spirited gentleman, not of our communion though then worshipping with us, gave four hundred thousand dollars, still awaits its completion.

Of more general humane institutions, the Old Ladies' Home, the Home for Aged Men, the Children's Aid Society, with its Newsboys' Home, the Diet Dispensary, the Industrial School Association, the Home for the Friendless, the Female Employment Society, the Home for Working Women, the Brooklyn Nursery, the Faith Home, the Union

for Christian Work, the Home for Consumptives, the Bureau of Charities, the Seaside Home, with its delightful summer arrangements for mothers and children among the poor, the Christian Association, with its magnificent building, and its important though inadequate fund of $150,000—all these have been established within this term of forty years. So have equally the literary or educational institutions—the Polytechnic Institute, with its constantly enriched and multiplied courses, the Adelphi Academy, the Historical Society, the Philharmonic Society, the Brooklyn Library, the Art Association, the Academy of Music, besides flourishing and useful private institutions for culture or for literary pleasure. As no other community along the seaboard has increased like this, from small beginnings to an aggregate population of nearly or quite three quarters of a million, in these forty years, so in no other have such incessant demands been made on those liberally disposed for large contributions toward the equipment which a great city needs. In Boston, in New York, in Philadelphia, Baltimore, in smaller cities like Hartford or Providence, a considerable proportion of such institutions now existing have been inherited from the past. They have needed only to be maintained, or perhaps more abundantly furnished. Here they have had to be built from the base; and the burden of doing it has been laid upon a people not unusually wealthy, not commonly native to the soil, and hardly capable, by its recent and changeful composition, of being pervaded by that public spirit which comes as a tradition to those long resident in a town, whose parents perhaps were there before them.

As a matter of course, much of the work has had to be done by comparatively few. It has had to be done almost wholly by the living, since important legacies to public institutions from the wealth of the dying have been distressingly few. It has brought its privilege to those who have done it, but it also has laid heavy duties upon them. On no other continent could an equal achievement have been proposed—to supply a vast city, within a few years, by voluntary gifts, with the needful institutions for training its intelligence, moulding its character, organizing its charity, ennobling its future. The work is by no means wholly done; but so far as it has proceeded it is simply due to the truth to say that those united in this congregation have taken their share with liberal energy, have been prompt to lead when that was required, as well as always ready to follow. The exact figures of the gifts made here to institutions within the city, I cannot command; but except in the instance of the Adelphi Academy, remote from us, and having its numerous and wealthy constituency upon its own ground, I think that

no one of those which I have named has failed to find among us effective assistance. Several of them had here their initiative. All of them have received large aids in money, with constant and vigorous moral succor.

Nor can it be said that the sympathies of this people have been limited to the community of which it is part. The first large contribution here made, in the second or third year of my ministry, was of eight thousand dollars for a distant college, on the Western Reserve. Much larger individual contributions have since been made to colleges at the East. To many churches, near or remote, gifts have been forwarded, aggregating tens of thousands of dollars, for the erection of houses of worship, or of parsonage-homes; while our regular monthly contributions have not been interrupted, to the Home Missionary work, to the cause of Foreign Missions, to the Seaman's Friend Society, to the Association which specially ministers to the red and the black races in our land, to the societies which plant Sunday Schools, or erect and furnish new houses of prayer, or distribute the Bible, to the cause of Christian education. The society which seeks to establish Sunday Schools in foreign countries had its origin here, and has now in this church some principal officers. The contributions to all these branches of Christian effort have been sometimes enlarged, as families have become more interested in them, or again have been reduced, as such families have removed, to be replaced by others less conversant with the work or less active in promoting it. But the general level has been fairly maintained; and from what I know of individual gifts, passing outside the treasury of the church, and not unfrequently through my own hands, as well as from the treasurer's collective reports, I hazard nothing in saying that twenty thousand dollars a year, for the forty years, would be less rather than more than the amount here contributed to philanthropic and Christian institutions. It has far surpassed what has been used, in the same term of years, for our current expenses. The sum is not extraordinary, of course, as compared with the gifts of wealthier churches; but it shows a spirit of steady liberality, for which we may appropriately give thanks.

It has been a special aim of the church, from an early period in its history, to make the Gospel which it honors and loves familiar to the poor, and to carry the message of Divine invitation to those in the city to whom this otherwise might not go. We gladly offer free seats in this house, to the number of nearly two hundred, to those who wish to hear the Gospel but who can make no pecuniary return. The rental of our pews is carefully adjusted, so that, while some of them bear an annual

charge of hundreds of dollars, others are rated at fifty, or forty, or twenty dollars a year. We have gladly aided churches in parts of the town which at the time were less attractive than this, and have seen some of them grow into splendid strength and fame. For many years we contributed annually thousands of dollars to the City Mission Society, besides giving important assistance in practical counsel and in stimulating purpose. With the increase in the number of churches coöperating in its work, with the augmented demands made upon us by our particular Mission-field, I am sorry to add, with the passing from among us by removal or death of some to whom the Society had been dear, our contributions to it for several years have been seriously diminished. It will be an omen of good to the church, and to the city, when they rise again, as I trust they soon will, to the highest level which they ever have reached. A Mission-school among the poor was opened by members of this congregation nearly forty years since, while such schools were still infrequent. Though limited, and sometimes seriously threatened, by changes in the population around it, this was not suffered to languish or decay; and ten years since the church erected, and amply furnished, a charming Chapel, at a cost of forty thousand dollars, into which the school was then transported. At an annual charge of some thousands of dollars, which the Society gladly meets, a vigorous Sunday-school is there maintained, of eight hundred members, with Infant classes, Bible classes, a Sewing-school, an Industrial Club, and a free Library; a faithful Minister of the Gospel conducts morning and evening services on Sunday, with a weekly prayer-meeting, and does a large work in pastoral visitation; a second meeting for conference and prayer is carried on by the young people of the church; while from eighty to a hundred of our members and officers take active and effective part in the Sunday instruction.

I do not affirm that all which has thus been done by the church for the ministry of the Gospel to those not possessed of worldly goods ought to content us. The plan may not be ideally complete. But it certainly shows that the Christian households here associated, while happy in their own fellowships and services, have not been unmindful of the duty and the privilege of ministering to others. Nor do I yet see another plan, for similar endeavors, better conceived or more comprehensive. The location of the church is in a part of the city remote from the poor. Though our free seats are largely occupied, there are many who will not take the time, or make the journey, needed to reach them. There is with some an unnecessary shyness, nowise dishonorable though wholly superfluous, about entering with confidence and regular

frequency into a building belonging to others, to the maintenance of whose services they do not contribute. Under these conditions, it seems necessary to try to make the Gospel familiarly at home upon their own ground. A church must of course have a certain revenue, as truly as a college or an asylum, a family, or a city. If not derived from permanent endowments, which are rarely beneficial, or painfully wrung from scanty purses under the threat of future terrors, or secured in some indirect criss-cross fashion, on what is known as the Free-church arrangement, this must be derived from a fair and definite annual tax settled upon the pews. If then extravagant salaries are not paid, and if in addition to many free seats within its own walls, and universally free seats in its beautiful Chapel, a church supports constantly from two to four missionary teachers, with a cultivated lady-reader of the Bible to visit scattered families at their homes, and if scores of its members take active and earnest personal part in its Mission-work, I see not that it is properly liable to any sharp criticism for alleged neglect or disdain of the poor. Certainly such criticism comes with ill grace from those who know not in themselves, and cannot carry to others, Christ's gracious message of power and promise; who have nothing whatever to offer to the poor but rum and blasphemy, for both of which they expect to be paid.

Upon its own edifice the congregation here worshipping has naturally made liberal expenditures, but it has needed what it has paid for, and the outlay has been nowise extravagant, as compared with that simultaneously made upon neighboring private houses, or with the aggregate wealth of the Society. Having cost originally sixty-five thousand dollars, or more than twice the primary estimate, a debt was left upon the church-building which was fully paid a year or two after the Pastor came. Several years later it became necessary to substantially reconstruct the interior, giving additional security to the roof. Another expenditure, of nearly twenty thousand dollars, was thus incurred, and was speedily met. After fifteen years more it appeared needful to purchase additional adjoining lots, and to extend the entire structure, gaining larger space for the Sunday-assemblies, while adding new lecture and conference rooms, a new Sunday-school chapel, more modern pews, a richer organ, with an ampler and pleasanter Pastor's Study. The work was undertaken with intelligent courage; but again the expenditure far exceeded the careful estimates, surpassing, indeed, the entire preceding cost of the building. A large indebtedness was thus incurred, which the congregation with vigorous will faced and paid while the Pastor was absent in Europe, and when it seemed by no means certain that he could ever resume his work. He has not yet for-

gotten the thrill which shot a sudden wave of gladness through heart and brain on a May-day in Rome, when a telegram announced the result; nor has he ever ceased to rejoice in the illustration, so splendidly given, of the unyielding and generous strength of this beloved Society. A hotel-parlor, looking out upon the Piazza di Spagna, will have for him always this signal association.

As the result of such pecuniary outlays, we have a church-edifice, not as vast as some, but stately and attractive, and as complete in its permanent appointments as can easily be found; with seats for fourteen hundred in its pews, with sufficient and inviting auxiliary rooms, with its whole purpose expressed in its structure, and with no burden of indebtedness upon it. It corresponds closely with the character and aims of the spiritual body worshipping in it. It is puritanic, in its solid strength of foundations and walls, and in the interior constructions of oak; but it delightfully adds grace to strength, elegance of line, and an unobtrusive charm of color, to the massive solidity. A piece of Plymouth Rock has been from the first imbedded in its tower; but its basal stones lie deeper than that, even as of the spiritual house which it shelters and represents the corner-stone is neither the theology nor the order of the Pilgrims, but the Person and Work of Christ. The story of its growth, answering to the steady growth of its congregation, is recorded in its extending walls, and gives them already a historical interest. The rhythmic lines of its interior, with the rich and delicate harmonies of its tints, invest it with beauty and dignity to our eyes; while the sweet majesty of the tones of its bell supplies an almost articulate voice to the feeling of Christian adoration which pervades it. As we regard it, the whole building delightfully corresponds with the sentiment and purpose, the lofty thought, the spiritual culture, the devout aspiration, which are sought to be expressed and nourished within it. We trust that it will stand for many generations, to represent the truth which here has been preached, with the hope which by that truth has been cherished, and to testify to those who daily pass it of the spheres on high toward which its spire significantly points, and of the Master who within it is praised and adored.

I have spoken of the church in its constitution, its spirit, and its work, as I have seen them for forty years; but the picture would remain incomplete unless enclosed, as in an exterior marginal rim, by some brief mention of the encompassing changes, social and civic as well as religious, amid which this life has been proceeding. Set in the frame of such an outline of outlying change, the essential consistency and continuity of that life may become to us still more distinct.

The changes in its own membership have been many. There have been received into it, from the beginning, 2,144 members, 1,239 upon letters from other churches, 905 on confession of their faith—all the latter, with one exception, since this pastorate began. More than three hundred have died while connected with the church, 297 as noted on our records; and 849 have been dismissed with commendatory letters, or have been otherwise separated from the church. The names of 998 members are now upon our roll, though more than a hundred of them are marked as absentees, some of whom no doubt have died in their absence. Ten of those here taught in religion have entered the ministry of the Gospel; and several of them are now rendering faithful service, at the East or the West.

These numbers of course are nowise large as compared with those on the records of churches which number their communicants by thousands, their annual accessions not unfrequently by hundreds. But remembering how retired and comparatively permanent this congregation has been, and that from an early period in its history at least one half of those worshipping in it had been already enrolled as communicants, we may reasonably feel that God has accepted and blessed our work, causing the church, under the dew of His grace, to grow as the lily, and giving to it a beauty as of the olive-tree, if He has not enabled it to spread widely its branches, and to cast forth its roots as Lebanon. It is also to be remembered that the instances have been many in which those from abroad attending school in the city, and for the time worshipping with us, have here been led to a love for the Lord the public confession of which they have afterward made, as was meet and right, in the home-congregations to which they returned.

The changes in Christian circles around us have been rapid, and in the aggregate sadly impressive. I think that every member of the Council by which I was installed, lay or clerical, has since passed from life on earth. Certainly of the chief clerical members—Drs. Bacon, Blagden, Spencer, Badger, Dr. Thompson, Dr. Dwight, Dr. Lansing, Dr. Adams, my father, and others—not one remains to be to-day greeted by us. Many other clergymen then or since eminent in the city have also entered within the gates:—Drs. Cox, Lewis, Jacobus, McLane, Greenleaf; Drs. Stone, Vinton, Cutler, Diller, W. H. Lewis; Dr. Taylor, Dr. Brodhead, Dr. Nathan Bangs, Rev. Robert Seney, all of whom were then here, with Dominie Johnson, highest of Anglicans, and most lovable of men; Drs. Bethune, Budington, Kennedy, Rockwell, Rufus Clark, Dr. Inglis, Dr. Schenck, Dr. Guion, Drs. Elmendorf, Eells, Kimball, Perry, Dixon, with many others, who came later. I am, I

believe, with one honored exception, the oldest Pastor, in the order of settlement, in active service in the same parish, in any Protestant communion in New York or Brooklyn. Many of the churches immediately around us have been served, as you know, by several Pastors, in the period reviewed:—the First Presbyterian Church by five, the Baptist Church on Pierrepont street by six, the First Dutch Church by six, the Church on the Heights by seven, Grace Church by five, St. Ann's Church by four, Trinity Church by only three. It may not have implied special wisdom on your part to be content with one ministry so long; but it shows how kindly God has dealt with us, and how genially conservative this Society has been.

The changes in the outward condition of the cities, now knit by the Bridge into practical oneness, have been so many and so surprising that it seems impossible that others of like novelty and importance should occur in another such term of years. At the time of my installation, as some of you remember, we had no water in this city, save that which came through the frequent street-pumps, or was gathered in cisterns from the roofs. New York had received it only four years before, through the then unfinished Croton Aqueduct. We had, on this side of the river, no gas in our houses, or along our streets; no City Hall, or municipal buildings; of course no street-railways, and no telegraph connections. One struck the country-road, winding between farms, a little beyond the present City-Hall square. The city had no uniformed police. The protection of it, so far as there was any, was in the hands of the City Watch, with two captains, two assistants, two watch-houses, and sixty watchmen, divided into squads of fifteen each, to keep guard by turns during day and night. The pay of the watchmen was fifty cents a day. There were said to be also nine invisible constables, or one for each ward. The assessed value of real and personal property in the city was less than twenty-seven millions of dollars ($26,933,616), or considerably less than that of the real estate alone in the first ward to-day. There were twelve public schools, with less than twenty-six hundred pupils, maintained at a cost of $23,236, in place of the sixty-nine schools of to-day, with sixty-eight thousand pupils, and an expenditure of $1,600,000. Holy Trinity Church had not been opened. The building of Grace Church had not been begun. The Church on the Heights was not commenced till four years later. The square on which this church was erected was occupied, for the larger part, as a pasture for cows. On the south side of Remsen street, from Henry to Court streets, there was not a house; on the north side were but two. Montague street was as nearly without houses, and was not opened to the

river, where the Wall-street ferry had not been started. What is now Prospect Park was a rough, dreary, malarious waste, with a few shanties for colored people scattered among its intricate thickets. The hills on this side of it, now rapidly being covered with costly and attractive houses, were vacant uplands. Dr. Cox called his house, at the point where Oxford street crosses Fulton, "Rusurban," as being in the country, while connected with the town. His hold upon his people was thought by some to have been weakened, by the fact that he had migrated so far into the Island. The Bridge which connects us with Manhattan Island, with its nightly crown of electric lights, would have seemed more incredible, if any one had dreamed of it, than a vision of angels flaming forth upon the sky; while a railroad in the air would have bewildered the imagination, like a romancer's fancy of a flying stone sphinx. Brooklyn was only known to the country, and was principally known within itself, as offering a dormitory to the people of New York, and as the last considerable place on the way to Greenwood.

Across the river the changes have been yet more conspicuous. Castle Garden was then a place for great musical performances. Stately residences stood around the Battery, or overlooked the Bowling Green. Columbia College was on the old site, between Barclay and Murray streets, and its ancient sycamores had not disappeared. Trinity Church had been recently erected. The Brick Church stood on what is now known as Printing House Square. St. George's was on Beekman street, at the corner of Cliff, and had attached parishioners in Brooklyn. The Tabernacle Church was on Broadway, between Anthony, now known as Worth street, and Leonard. The New York Hospital was a little below it, on the corner of Duane street. Dr. Macaulay was preaching in Murray street, Dr. James Alexander in Duane street, Dr. Adams in Broome street, Dr. Patton in Spring street. The whirl of the city, as on an axis, had hardly begun to carry churches northward, in that continually unsatisfied search for permanent locations which seems destined never to cease. On the east of the Bowery were fashionable neighborhoods. Toward the west, St. John's Square, Varick street, Beach street, Laight street, were aristocratic. So, in their measure, were Murray and Warren streets. Children played, and gardens blossomed, where engines now throb, and warehouse-walls shut out the sky. Great dry-goods' houses were in Pearl street, Pine street, sometimes in Wall street. Broadway was a street for retail traffic, with boarding-houses, and many hotels; but above Grand street it had houses for the wealthy. St. Thomas' Church was on the corner of Houston street. Bond street was full of dignity and riches. Washington Square was a recent centre

of opulent mansions. Union Square seemed the limit of the town; and the costly stone church which preceded there the Tiffany warehouse was not finished. The Astor Library was not founded. The Cooper Institute, and the Bible House, were not erected. The New York Historical Society had no building of its own, but held its meetings in a room of the University, and kept them alive by adding oysters and coffee to the graceful or learned literary papers. Fifth Avenue, above the open fields of what is now Madison Square, was a common road, enclosed by fences. The Central Park lands were an unoccupied wild, of marsh and rock, not purchased by the city till ten years later.

To those who remember New York and Brooklyn as they then were, the succeeding changes bewilder thought, almost baffle belief. The incessant inrush of impetuous populations has swept the ancient landmarks before it as spring freshets sweep before them the tiny dams which children build. The compact, sociable, and hospitable towns of forty years since have disappeared amid sudden floods. The boundary lines of either city have been flung widely out, to make room for the surging immigration. This has multiplied already our local population nearly or quite twelve-fold, and is pushing on to muster here soon a million inhabitants.

The changes occurring in the country at large, in the same term of years, have been proportionately vast, and some of them of a deeper moral significance. When I stood in this pulpit on the stormy evening of November 19th, 1846, Mr. James K. Polk was in the second year of his Presidency, against whom, two years earlier, I had cast my first national vote with the heartiest zeal. The war with Mexico had commenced, but the battles of Buena Vista and Cerro Gordo had not been fought, nor Vera Cruz surrendered to our arms. It was still ten months before our troops entered the capital. The Oregon Treaty with Great Britain had been lately negotiated, but gold had not been found in California, nor was there any hint in the air of the vast immigration which was soon to draw an adventurous nation over the continent, and to build a new empire along the Pacific. The first line of telegraph, between Washington and Baltimore, had been in operation for two years, and that between New York and Philadelphia for one year; but the novel invention was rather the wonder and the luxury of the few than the instrument of the many, and hardly the faintest prophecy had been given of the half-million miles of wire along which the messages of eager millions now incessantly pass. The Oceanic Telegraph was no more imagined than would have been an instrument for conversing with the stars. The Erie Railroad was not opened; nor that on the banks of the

Hudson River; nor that between New Haven and New York. Less than five thousand miles of railway-track had been laid in the country (4,930), as against the more than a hundred and thirty thousand miles now built and operated. An honored Congregational minister going to Oregon the year after I came here, had to take eight months for the journey. He returned, some years since, in less than a week; and now he can speak from the same point to friends in this city, over the telegraph, more quickly than we can send a messenger to upper New York. The National Union included twenty-nine States, instead of the thirty-eight of to-day. It was years, of course, before Slavery and Freedom met in their fierce grapple in Kansas; fourteen years before the election of Lincoln; more than eighteen before the close of the Rebellion, with the resulting destruction of Slavery. The Nation has been essentially re-made, since this pastorate began, in larger proportions, on a nobler and securer plan; the empty spaces of its immense territories have been largely occupied with villages and cities; its population has been multiplied from twenty to more than sixty millions; the moral and political life which pervades it has been vastly enriched in power and promise; its place in the world, with its influence over the peoples of mankind, has been signally exalted. Others, coming after us, will no doubt see changes following these, of constant importance, and of secular interest. It seems impossible that they should see changes more radical or more rapid than we have witnessed, or more thoroughly alive with prophetic indications.

Yet the simultaneous changes in Europe have been scarcely less swift or surprising. Louis Philippe seemed then established for life on the throne of France, with the prospect of secure succession to his sons. Louis Napoleon, recently escaped from the Castle of Ham, was brooding in London, an impoverished exile. The long pontificate of Pius Ninth had just opened, on a liberal basis. The Northern Italian provinces, famous and lovely, were under Austrian military government. The two Sicilies moaned, without hope, beneath Bourbon oppression. What whirls of revolution soon followed, you remember:—the expulsion of Louis Philippe from France; the Hungarian rebellion, bloodily suppressed, only to become politically successful a few years later; the Battle-summer of 1848, the first Presidency of Louis Napoleon, the founding of the second Empire by the bloody surprise of the *coup d'état.* To the children of to-day these seem a part of ancient history. So does the Crimean War, or the sudden unification of Italy, with the ending of the temporal power of the Pope. Even the expulsion of Austria from the German Bund, with the simultaneous elevation of Prussia to political

and military leadership—even the crash of the Empire in France, after twenty years of real unsoundness though of delusive and dangerous glitter—begin to seem distant in time; while the changes in England, and in the relation of England to Ireland, though silently proceeding, have been constant and vast, since the year in which the Corn Laws were abolished, and the party of Young Ireland seceded from O'Connell.

With what rapidity the world beyond Christendom has been rushing along the grooves of change, we also know. Japan remained, forty years since, hermetically sealed against the commerce and the Christianity which now it seeks, in eager rebound from the long isolation. China was inaccessible to missionary effort, except at a few specified ports, and Chinamen on the streets of American cities, from which an ignorant jealousy now would expel them, were almost as rare as Buddhist temples. Eleven years after this pastorate began broke forth into fires of passionate battle that Sepoy Rebellion, the consequences of the suppression of which have been so important in the religious and political conditions obtaining in India. The metallic wealth of Australia had not been discovered when we met here, the province of Victoria had not been constituted, and the insular continent was chiefly known to the civilized world as the home of lowest barbarian tribes, who were gradually being crowded from the coast by the multiplication of vast sheep-farms. Africa, which now has been pierced and crossed on many lines of exploration, and into which the expectant enterprise of commerce and of missions is eagerly pressing, was almost as unknown, except along narrow pestilential sea-edges, as is the geography of Jupiter or of Neptune.

It is hard to realize through what scenes and cycles of transformation the world has moved. We are measurably insensitive to the rapid revolutions in the relations of countries and continents, and in the internal developments of each, because we are familiar with them; as men fail to notice the clang of machinery when they live in the midst of it, or become almost careless of earthquake trembles when these often recur. No events now seem to us amazing, because we have seen such collisions and catastrophes, with such unexampled re-fashioning of states. But any one who has looked from a high and quiet point of vantage on the history of the latter part of the century, has had before him a panorama unequalled, in rapidity of movement, in the tragic splendor of achievement and overthrow, in events suggestive of immeasurable future cosmical change.

It is perhaps yet more appropriate, on an occasion like this, to notice the swift currents and swirls of religious thought, in Christian lands, in

the midst of whose vehement urgencies we have stood, and by which the spiritual history of the time has been stirred and tossed like the vexed surface of agitated seas. We have seen on the one hand the old scepticism, which never dies, on the other hand a renascent ritualism—exacting and haughty in its Roman exhibition, clamorous and conceited in the Protestant imitation—facing and alternately exciting each other, each arrogant, each ambitious, and neither perhaps surpassing the other in dislike to the truth as we have held it. In Protestant communities have been manifold influences tending to a wide unsettling of belief. In the Papal communion tendencies working toward stricter definition and completer development have issued in the action of the Vatican Council, ascribing infallible authority to the Pontiff. No intelligent community can have remained unaffected by the alternating swing of such persistent and imperious movements.

The German thought, often aggressively rationalistic, whose influence was comparatively limited in this country forty years since, has made a constantly wider appeal to the American mind, and is perhaps as active as ever, and as effective, in the influence which it exerts to-day. The Life of Jesus, by Dr. Strauss, representing the mythical theory of the Gospels, was first presented to English readers through a translation in A. D. 1846. With the kindred Life of Jesus, by the French Renan, translated and circulated twenty years later, this book of Dr. Strauss stands, in some important respects, in singular contrast; but equally with that it sought to resolve the whole transcendent story of the Lord into a fabric of the fancy, aerial, and rose-tinted; and the influence of both was for the time like that of subtle perfumed poisons, offered in dainty and shining goblets, or hidden in garlands. It was fondly thought by some sceptical people that Dr. Strauss, especially, had delivered the New Testament to death and dust, with the religion which it contains. But somehow the New Testament was the book which survived, while to think of his now is like remembering a ghost. Many other volumes in the same line of thought have followed his, from German, Dutch, and English writers, but none I think more elaborate, perhaps none for the time more effective, than that which gave him his rather brief and dreary fame.

Meantime, of course, philosophy, archæology, natural science, have pursued their own paths, in indifference to Christianity, and though without purposed hostility to it have not unfrequently propounded theories essentially destructive of what in it is radical and vital. The Positive Philosophy of Comte, as represented to English readers by Miss Martineau's version in A. D. 1853, and by eloquent subsequent

essays of others, has wrought in a distinctly atheistic direction. Philosophical or poetic discussions of the ethnic religions, especially of the two or three greatest among them, have left an impression on many minds that Christianity is only the best of a group, if indeed it be altogether that; that all have sprung out of the intellectual nature of man, and that each has its own advantages and defects; while the theory of impersonal evolution in nature—that the universe is a development of original mechanical force, without directing intelligence, and without foreseen ends—this, as presented learnedly, largely, often with singular literary skill, by German or English enthusiasts for it, has assailed the foundation of all religions, even of the moral nature in man. Yet in journals, on platforms, sometimes in ambitious harangues from the pulpit, the echo of such adventurous speculations has made itself heard; and those not familiar with the argument at first hand, perhaps not capable of following its steps, have often been glad to accept a conclusion which seemed to leave the universe headless, and every man free to do as he lists.

At the same time, however, it is to be said that the simultaneous defences of Christianity have not been inferior, in number or weight, to the attacks thus made upon it; that earnest and searching evangelical thought has been immensely indebted to the diligent labor of German scholars, and also of French, represented in histories, commentaries, profound philosophical, philological, and archæological investigations; and that more has been written, ably, learnedly, with the eloquence of adoring affection, setting forth the Divine Person and Life of the Lord Jesus Christ, in these forty years, than in any or all preceding periods. On the whole, one may with confidence affirm that the foreign element, as now domesticated in our literature, has been helpful rather than hostile to the Gospel; while many things indicate that more and more it is to bring to the Master of Christendom spices and riches, of myrrh and gold.

We are more intimately connected in this country with the English than with either the French or the German thought; and the frequent reactions and sharp collisions there appearing have probably had more general reflection on this side of the ocean than anywhere else outside of England. When this church was organized, the wide and energetic movement toward Romanism, among those who had been leaders in the Anglican communion, was in eager progress. The series of Oxford Tracts for the Times had recently been finished. Newman, Faber, with others of their spiritual bias, were received into the Roman Church at the close of the year 1845, or early in 1846. Manning, the Wilber-

forces, with many others, followed, to be succeeded by those in sympathy with them, till more than three hundred clergymen, it is said, of the English Church, with a multitude of lay-members, some of them specially cultured and distinguished, had accepted the Roman rule. On the other hand, naturally, a strong counter-current, accelerated if not provoked by this movement, was carrying men like Francis Newman, or James Anthony Froude, in a different direction, to opposite results. Froude's "Nemesis of Faith," and Newman's "Phases of Faith," were published in A. D. 1849–1850. And while the High-church party in the Anglican body was strenuously endeavoring to furnish doctrines and a ritual system by which those meditating secession to Rome might be satisfied and detained, the Broad-church sentiments and predispositions found their representatives in men like Whately, Arnold, Maurice, Stanley, Kingsley, and others. Robertson began his brief but memorable ministry at Brighton in A. D. 1847. Hampden was made Bishop of Hereford at the end of the same year, though his orthodoxy had been vehemently challenged. A year or two later the accomplished and liberal Milman became Dean of St. Paul's; while Henry Alford, afterward the eminent Dean of Canterbury, was preparing for his edition of the New Testament, with that commentary upon it parts of which, to not a few of his fellow church-men, were almost more offensive than an infidel treatise. In A. D. 1850 was pronounced by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council the famous Gorham Decision, which seemed to many to deal destructively with the entire sacramental system of the Anglican Church.

Such divergent or opposing currents of thought, simultaneously appearing, are of course not infrequent. They have often been shown more signally in history; as when Bossuet and Fenelon led in different directions the best minds of France, or as when, more remarkably, Calvin and Loyola prepared at the same time at the University of Paris for their widely contrasted labors. But in an exhibition less conspicuous, on an area more limited, such antitheses of opinion have in our time appeared in the English Church, with a distinctness and in a force which may not be forgotten.

In close correspondence with such movements abroad the same tendencies, in either direction, were beginning to exhibit their effects on this side of the ocean when we commenced our work in this place. Many ministers, chiefly of the Episcopal Church, prominently represented by Bishop Ives, then or soon afterward joined themselves to the Roman communion, with not a few laymen, and excellent women, of various previous church-connections. Mr. Brownson, who had before experimented

on nearly all varieties of opinion in his search for a belief, had established his Review in A. D. 1844; and he was already coming to be recognized as the most intrepid American controversialist on the Papal side. The subsequent decrees of the Vatican Council, so energetically resisted in Europe, were generally welcomed by Romanists here, as carrying to development the slowly maturing Pontifical system, and practically fulfilling the aspiration of ages. The aggressive zeal, the effective power, with the keen expectation of success, have never been greater in that communion, as existing among us, than they have been of late. From Bishop Hughes to the Cardinal Archbishop, from the plain churches of forty years since to the superb marble Cathedral, the progress has been certainly a great one; and it has been in the main fairly achieved—by labor among the poor, by patience in priests and sagacity in prelates, by joyful constancy in doing the work and in setting forth the doctrine which to those trained by the attractive and mandatory system appear Divine.

On the other hand, what are vaguely and inaccurately described as "liberal" opinions in theology have enlisted for their support many cultivated men, formerly in the ministry of one or other of the evangelical communions; and some hitherto in agreement with us appear now to be moving in a similar direction, though without any very imperative impulse, and with a certain diffident stiffness quite in contrast with the elastic ease of movement which the thorough-bred rationalist commonly shows. In distinctively Unitarian circles the general movement since the death of Dr. Channing, in A. D. 1842, has been, I judge, though with signal and noble exceptions, toward a view of Christ, of His work and His authority, which those who were united in the movement at the outset were far from entertaining. The eloquent discourses of Theodore Parker are now published by the body which during his life regarded him as a dangerous radical. The principal push and definiteness of purpose appear to be shown in this direction; and not a few prominent Unitarian preachers are understood to stand already on the basis of simple natural theism—considering Jesus a noble but mistaken man, in advance of his time but involved in some of its principal delusions, looking upon the sacraments as idle or essentially superstitious observances, selecting texts with equal readiness from Pagan philosophers or from the New Testament, and not regarding even the belief in a personal God as a necessary condition of frank and cordial spiritual fellowship.

I need not multiply illustrations of the counter-currents in spiritual tendency, and in the religious thought which declares this, which have been ceaselessly eddying around us for forty years; nor of the contra-

dictory opinions, differing from the Gospel as we apprehend that, and often fiercely hostile to it, which have reverberated in books, or been popularized in journals, or more or less successfully thrust into pulpits. But the facts are also gratefully to be noticed, that in the various evangelical communions the tendency has been vigorous toward a more vital and intimate sense of their practical unity, and toward coöperation in Christian endeavor wherever the way to this has been opened; that their pervasive missionary spirit has become continually more inspiring, and has given to all their organized movement new courage and hope; and that the theology obtaining among them, not losing its majesty, or the sharpness of its defining lines, has steadily become more Christocentric, and has been interpreted with increasing distinctness in the line of its profound spiritual significance, rather in that of traditional exposition, or of a formal constructive logic. The discussions of fifty years ago, in regard to sin, the Divine purposes, with man's power of contrary choice, left results into which later thinkers have entered, and through which they have reached a nobler apprehension of the Lord and His work. A choice example of the modern spirit is that presented by Dr. Bushnell, whose fine genius, with his quick sensibility to the great Christian facts, began to be exhibited in published discourses, and in volumes, less than forty years since, and whose influence has not been confined to this country. His particular opinions, upon certain points in the philosophy of religion, may not have attracted large numbers of disciples; but it can scarcely be doubted, I think, that his animating teachings have expanded horizons which were narrower before, have brightened atmospheres which inclined to be dull, and have given delightful grace and glow to the harder lines of theological thought. Others, of a less ecumenical distinction, have wrought in his temper, and with a similar effect.

It is also gladly to be recognized that while this church has stood, as I have said, consistently and firmly on its foundation of evangelical truth, the churches of the communion with which it is connected, and of other communions holding essentially the same supreme doctrine, have been prospered and multiplied to a degree before unexampled. What the number of Congregational churches was in this country in A. D. 1846, I cannot say with certainty; but four years later they were reckoned at 1,971, with less than two hundred thousand communicants (197,197). At the beginning of this year the number of these churches was more than four thousand (4,170), with nearly four hundred and twenty thousand communicants (418,564), and with more than half a million (510,322) teachers and scholars embraced in their Sunday-

schools. These numbers are small, however, as compared with those representing the growth of some other communions. Taking from the American Almanac for A. D. 1851 the figures for the preceding year, and from the same publication for A. D. 1886 the figures for the last year, some examples of the increase are as follows :—.

In A. D. 1850 the Presbyterian congregations, North and South, were 5,173, with communicants 451,330 ; in A. D. 1885 the congregations were 11,318, the communicants 938,210. In A. D. 1850 the Lutheran congregations were reckoned as 1,604, with communicants estimated at 163,000 ; in A. D. 1885 the congregations were 5,558, with nearly a million enrolled communicants (950,868). In A. D. 1850 the Baptist congregations, of all sorts, were 11,863, with 831,035 communicants ; in A. D. 1885 the congregations had risen to 28,506, with nearly two and a half millions of communicants (2,424,878). In A. D. 1850 the Methodist congregations, North and South, Episcopal and non-Episcopal, were about fourteen thousand, with a million and a quarter of communicants (1,230,069) ; in A. D. 1885 the same congregations were about thirty-eight thousand, with communicants numbering more than three and a half millions (3,686,114). Even this number fails, probably, to exhibit the truth, as the official publication of the Methodist Church states the number of communicants at nearly four millions (3,958,156). The Protestant Episcopal Church—which some now aspire to designate as "The American Catholic Church"—out of whose ancestral archetype in England came the Methodist communion, and which, whatever attractions it may offer to those inclined to it, has no such hold as the latter possesses on the popular mind, presents no numbers comparable to these ; but in place of the twelve hundred and thirty-two parishes credited to it in A. D. 1850, it has now, according to its official publication, thirty-four hundred and fifty parishes with nearly four hundred thousand communicants (398,098)—this enumeration covering, however, sixteen missionary districts, some of which are in the other hemisphere, in Africa, China and Japan.

It has been stated, with I think substantial correctness, that including all evangelical denominations, there were in this country in A. D. 1850 forty-three thousand local churches (43,072), with three and a half millions of communicants (3,529,987) ; and that in A. D. 1880, thirty years after, the churches numbered nearly a hundred thousand (97,090), with more than ten millions of communicants (10,065,963). Such a vast and swift advance in the number of congregations in which the Gospel is earnestly preached, surely and wholly contradicts the notion, sometimes expressed, that the ancient majestic interpretation of the Gospel is

losing its hold on the eager and inquisitive American mind. With a progress at all corresponding to this, in the thirty years to come, the result will be one to give to the continent a Christian renown, and to offer the most significant promise for the victorious advance of the Gospel in all the earth.

I have thus set before you, my dear Christian Friends, in general outline, the character of this church as I have seen it developed and matured in the years now closing, with such a sketch as the time has permitted of the work which it has done, of the changes amid which its life has proceeded, and of the influences which have been energetic and conspicuous around it. We can hardly help feeling, I think, as we stand at the end of this review, that they who united to form this church, most of them then in early or in middle manhood, and who gave to it freely of thought, counsel, and pecuniary aid, did a good and fruitful work. Their enthusiasm for it has been justified by its history. In some respects, possibly, its work has surpassed their expectation. It is an occasion of heartiest joy that twelve out of the seventy-one at first in the church continue in it still ; and to them, as to us, it cannot but be a reason for gladness, and a motive to praise, that they who have later found here their church-home have cordially maintained and nobly reinforced the early spirit, only building more broadly on the primitive basis. I cannot doubt that this will continue to be the fact, while the church abides ; that however rapid and however surprising may be the changes in the city or the country, in Christendom or the world, this church will continue, still honoring in its faith the spiritual facts which years and changes do not touch, still doing the work entrusted to it, for the Master whom it worships, for the cause which it loves. It will be to the end, what it was at the beginning, a household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone. Ideas do not die. The truth of God, the Redemption of Christ, the grace of the Spirit, are subject to no mutation or decay. They will be here when we are gone. An energy from them is vitally involved in the conviction and spirit of the church, which will not vanish as suns and seasons pursue their course. To those who come after us the occasion for declaring them will still be presented. To us it has been given to see the august plans of Providence unfolding amid storms of thunder and fire, or evolved more silently, but almost as signally, in civil and political change, in the growth of cities, in multiplied mechanisms, in expansions of commerce, in the prosperous progress of the peoples and nations which honor the Master. Those plans are still moving toward supreme consummation. They are lifting valleys,

and leveling hills, to make a way before the wheels of Messiah's Throne. And they who are to succeed us here—associated as already they are, for prayer, and counsel, and beautiful enterprise—will have their work, as we have had ours, to do for Him whom nothing misleads and nothing baffles, whose Incarnation was the new birth of history, whose Cross links heaven and earth together, whose glory at last shall fill the world!

It is a great thing to have helped to establish, to have helped to upbuild, a church like this. He who puts his life into its growth "chooseth a tree that will not rot." Not only the community immediately around it, but others remoter, will take from it incitements and helps while years go on. A reward will come, ample and sure, for whatever of service and of sacrifice has been ours on its behalf. In the final triumph of righteousness and truth, wherever the Gospel has dominion in the earth, we shall have part.

I cannot but feel, too, that all will see in reviewing this history how natural it has been that such a church should attract to itself the strong and the enduring affection of those long familiar with it. There are obvious limitations upon its appeal to the public attention. It wants the enthusiasm excited by vast and changing congregations, gathered from widely separated districts by the fame of a preacher, by the frequent discussion of novel or semi-secular subjects, or by the recognized relation of a pulpit to the drifts and swells of political thought. It wants the attraction which may be connected with eccentricities of manner, or with specially elaborate musical services, with the sumptuous array of a rich ceremonial, or even with a constantly fervid tone of missionary appeal. And it lacks, of course, any impulse that might come from an intense denominational temper, eager for its own and critical toward others. But to those who here have had their home, the spiritual assembly, and in its measure the outward church, have a peculiar and sacred beauty:—from the Gospel here continuously set forth, with the reach of its stupendous declarations concerning realms which eye hath not seen, with the tenderness of its pathos, the ardor of its incessant invitations, the majestic scope and height of its promises; from the lovely, solemn, and inspiring sacraments here administered; from the Christian fellowships here formed and matured; from the ripened knowledges, and the ever deeper satisfactions of faith, here attained; from the common enterprises prompted and promoted, for the good of mankind, and the glory of God.

The very building has come to be associated, to many of us, with whatever has been superlative in our thought, with the sweetest comforts we have found in our grief, the richest incentives to the wise and

beneficent use of our strength, the supreme expectations concerning the Future which have crowned with their light and anointed with their chrism our common shaded and secular days. Without superstitious veneration for places we understand something of the moral fascination which particular shrines have had for their worshippers, since within these walls Tabor and Hermon have rejoiced before us in the name of the Lord, the darkness and the splendor over Calvary and Olivet have been manifest to our souls, we have walked with the Lord and heard His apostles, and have seen the skies parted above us, in the Advent, and for the Ascension. To our profoundest spiritual experience this has been—to us and to others may it always remain!—none other than the House of God, the Gate of Heaven.

It has come also to be associated, in a way most delightful to our affectionate human sensibilities, with the many who have gone from among us to the skies, with the good, the brave, the beautiful and the wise, who have sat beside us to listen to the truth which now they hear from the Master's lips; who have joined in praise with ours the voices which now are attuned to seraphs' harps; who have passed from the feast of love at this Table to the immortal Marriage Supper! Little children, who here were baptized, and whose feet trod early the Heavenly streets, walk again in beauty before us, as we enter these doors. Silent forms enter the pews, which stir no rustle, and fill no space. Beloved friends, partakers of our joy, or sharers of our most intimate life, seem evidently present, as we bow in prayer, or arise in praise. We are consciously encompassed by a great cloud of witnesses; and the very building becomes vital and eloquent with tender intimations of the ineffable mystery and majesty of celestial relations. To many of us no other can be like it, however surpassing it in brilliance of color or vast proportions. Its arches enclose the home of our hearts. The air which fills it is laden for us with memories and with prophecies. At some time, I trust, Memorial Windows will find in it their fitting place, to show, as often as men enter these aisles, the heavenly radiance shining through names here honored and beloved. If not in our time, then surely by the young, into whose hands this church must soon come, and who will take with it a rich inheritance of remembrance and incentive, this work will be done.

I do not wish to obtrude upon you any expression of personal feeling; but it cannot be amiss that I frankly say that it has been my own ever deepening and controlling attachment to the church—to the households embraced in it, to what is peculiar in its services and its spirit, to

the work which it has done in the city and for the land, to the very building which I have had my pleasant part in enlarging and adorning,—which has kept me here so many years, for all the best years of my life. I came hither in my youth, from one of the loveliest parishes of New England, to do the work which might here await me, not knowing in particulars what that was to be, or how long it might keep me, and with no plan whatever of spending my life here. It has never been my governing impression that a Minister should continue, as a matter of course, for all his years, in a parish to which he had early come. Sometimes this is well, perhaps oftener it is not. I have not been without occasional opportunities, of some of which you have known, to go elsewhere, to other pastorates, or to Collegiate or Seminary chairs; and some of these have been so attractive, and have been presented with such earnest persuasion, that I have been almost moved to yield. But no distinct providential demand has appeared in them, such as I thought I plainly saw when coming hither. On the other hand, special hindrances have appeared, in each principal case, to make going less easy; while the hold of this place and people upon me has proved always too strong to be broken. I could not leave, without a painful wrench of the spirit, the friendly neighborhood, the young institutions whose appeal is so keen to heart and hope, the constantly widening circle of households known to me from their youth up, with which my relations have been always delightful. This house itself has been sacred to me, as that in which God's Spirit has been manifest, to my heart as to yours; in which my children, like yours, have been baptized, and afterward received to the communion of the church, and later married; in which, indeed, the children's children have been brought to the font, to be led from thence in faith and prayer, on to the Supper.

I am grateful to God that He has permitted me to dwell so long in the city which has been kind to me beyond my deserts, and which never was fuller than at this hour of noble promise; in the church which has responded with ready acceptance to every best impulse that I could give, and which has been always, to me and mine, a Christian home full of charm and reward. I thank Him for the manifold beautiful work which He here set before me, and to which He has permitted me to give whatever of strength or of grace He has furnished. I trust that these scenes will still surround me, and that in your affectionate fellowship will be to me gladness and cheer, until I cease from public labor. I trust that the spirit which God has moved us to seek for this church—believing and thoughtful, affectionate and devout, conscientious and catholic, swift in motion to do the Lord's work, elate in hope before

the promises shining from afar—will still continue to quicken and mould it when one by one we shall all have gone!

So, my Friends, with gratitude for the past, with gladness for the present, and with happy and large expectation for the future, let us to-day re-consecrate this church, by re-consecrating ourselves, to Him in the faith of whom it was founded; to the vision of whom many from among us have gone already; before whom wait resplendent ages of peace and progress on the earth, the fruit of His coming, the reward of His Cross; around whom stands, in a beauty unblemished, with palms and song, the Church Triumphant! and unto Him, for that which He hath done, for that which He hereafter shall do, be now and ever all the praise! *Amen.*

APPENDIX.

PRESENTATION OF A BRONZE STATUE TO DR. STORRS, BY THE SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.

THE Sunday-schools of the Church of the Pilgrims being assembled in the Lecture-room on Thursday afternoon, November 18th, the following hymn was first sung:—

Round the Lord in glory seated,
  Cherubim and Seraphim
Filled His temple, and repeated,
  Each to each, th' alternate hymn:

"Lord, Thy glory fills the Heaven,
  Earth is with its fullness stored;
Unto Thee be glory given,
  Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord!"

With His seraph-train before Him,
  With His holy Church below,
Thus conspire we to adore Him,
  Bid we thus our anthem flow:

"Lord, Thy glory fills the Heaven,
  Earth is with its fullness stored;
Unto Thee be glory given,
  Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord!" *Amen.*

The Superintendent of the Church-school, Mr. George P. Stockwell, then spoke, as follows:—Dr. Storrs, this meeting of the officers, teachers, and children of our Sunday-schools, with you our Pastor and our friend, means something more than the pleasure which all of us feel at thus meeting you face to face, and being permitted to grasp your hand in congratulation. It means that we not only manifest our pleasure because of your presence with us this afternoon, but that we express our gratitude and thanksgiving to God, that He has permitted you for so many years to be the Pastor and Minister of this Church and Society of the Pilgrims. Strong and tender have been, and are, the chords of

love binding us together as Pastor and people. In coming hither you brought a blessing to this church—the blessing of such unity, strength, and consecration, in and to the work of the Master, as have been given to but few churches. In coming here you brought a blessing to this city, in which you have during all these years been actively interested, and have been an inspiration to others who have worked with you, in projecting and pushing forward to completion the various Christian, educational, and philanthropic works which stand to-day the pride and glory of the city. We might, on an occasion like this, multiply into many words our appreciation of all that you have been to us as individuals, to us as families, to this church of Christ, and to the city of Brooklyn; but we forbear, knowing as we do that you prefer that appreciation which is seen in the eye, felt in the hand-clasp, and witnessed in the life, rather than words of praise spoken to you by our lips.

We have gathered in these rooms before you, not as the church of the past, not as those actively interested with you in the work and service of the church forty, or even thirty years ago; these have, for the most part, passed into the skies. Nor yet, to any considerable extent, are we here as the church of the present; but rather as the church of the future—the children, all of them to a greater or less degree, thank God! formed under the guiding and moulding influence of your teaching and life. These children, and those coming with them, the officers and teachers of the Schools here represented, are glad to meet you this afternoon; and it has been our great pleasure to bring with us a testimonial of our affectionate regard for you. It is, largely, the gift of the children; and as such we are sure that it will be highly appreciated by you. We have selected this statue in bronze, and the pedestal on which it rests, as our gift. The bronze figure represents Labor—not the modern "Knight of Labor"—but let us interpret it as representing Labor, dignified and God-like, because consecrated to Christ, the Master Workman. Such has been your labor here, during the forty years of your ministry. You have been a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. The inscription we propose to put on this pedestal is as follows:—

"For the Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hands. These forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee."

We present this gift to you, together with our love, and with the earnest wish for your long continued life, and strength, and usefulness in this church, and among this people.

REPLY OF DR. STORRS.

My dear Friends:—Nothing could have been further from my mind when I suggested to the Committee of the church some weeks ago—as they approached me in regard to an observance of this anniversary—that I should like to meet the Sunday-schools of the church and of the Mission-chapel, than the thought that possibly you might present to me some testimonial of your regard. I certainly

accept it with very great tenderness and happiness in my heart, for the gift, and preëminently for the manner in which the gift comes, and for the love which it expresses, which, I trust, will be as permanent as the bronze itself. My appreciation of your affection, and of this memorial of it, would certainly endure as long as it does, if my life were to continue so long.

I desired to have this meeting, in the first place, because I am personally very much attached to the children of this congregation. Many of you, nearly all perhaps who are here, and who are directly connected with the congregation, I have baptized. Many of you are the children of those whom I baptized years ago; and I remember that the first sharp impression which I ever had of growing older was when a gentleman, taller than I am, and larger than I am, brought his child to be baptized, while I recollected, as he stood before me, that when he was a babe I had held him in my hands and baptized him! I think I had a keener sense of growing older, at that time, than I have ever had since—certainly than I had ever had before.

It is always a delight to me, when a child comes to me on the street, and says, "How do you do, Dr. Storrs"? putting out his or her hand to take mine. Sometimes I may not instantly remember those who thus come to me; for children in this day have a singular trick of growing older, pretty fast. Between four years and nine years, or between seven years and twelve years, they change so rapidly that one hardly can keep their appearance in mind. I wish some kind of arrangement were possible by which each child should carry a ticket, saying, "This is"—so and so; for then I should always know you! You, however, always know me, because I have got through with all this business of growing larger. And so, whenever you see me on the street, if you will just come and put your hand into mine, and say, "Good-morning, Dr. Storrs"—you will give me cheer for the day. I have always felt that such a greeting added beauty and enjoyment to the hours which followed. In London the fashion is, and here to some extent, but here not so generally, for every gentleman, as he goes down town in the morning, to wear a flower in his button-hole. Your greetings have been to me as the flower in the button-hole, the perfume of which I have been delightfully inhaling all the day, when you have come to me, on your way to school perhaps, and have said, simply, "How do you do"?

That is one reason why I wanted to see you all together. And then, I thought that this is a sort of Thanksgiving occasion. I do not mean that it is a Thanksgiving occasion on the part of the people because they have got through with forty years of my ministry, and these are not to come any more; but it is a sort of Thanksgiving to us all, that we have been permitted to dwell together in such happy harmony and common usefulness for so many years. And a Thanksgiving occasion, without children, is one of the dreariest things that can be. I never knew how dreary until two or three years ago it happened to us at our house to have a Thanksgiving where there was no child present. I thought then that it was about as sombre and funereal an occasion as one can easily find.

So, on this Thanksgiving I was anxious to meet the children in the afternoon, whether we had any meeting of parents and grown people in the evening or not.

Then, besides that, I have the feeling to which Mr. Stockwell has adverted in the delightful words of welcome and congratulation which he has spoken, that here I look into the future. I sit not unfrequently, in the summer-time, on the piazza of my house in the country, and with a spy-glass look over upon the Connecticut shore, where, as a lady said one day, through the clear, bright air you can almost see the door-knobs shining in the sun; and it is always interesting and surprising to me to see how distant objects are brought close to my eyes through that arrangement of the lenses. Here, in somewhat the same way, I look into your faces, and I see those who are to be in the Church of the Pilgrims, and those who are to be leaders in Brooklyn, twenty, thirty, forty, and fifty years hence. Not all of you will be here then; not all of you will be in this world then; but I hope that many will be, and that you will be in this church what your parents have been—rejoicing in it, rejoicing to keep it a Christian home, as it has been to us all in all these years, and rejoicing to contribute to make it effective in usefulness, so far as your influence in it can reach, or your influence through it can extend.

These years to come will pass very rapidly with you. It seems wonderful to me now, as I stand here, that it is forty years to-morrow night since I stood in yonder pulpit for the first time. These mottoes upon the walls—"1846"—"1886"—represent a long interval. I do not know exactly, by the way, why the "1886" is in the colored flowers which are given to it, unless it be a pleasant and flattering intimation on the part of those who put it there that their Pastor, in these forty years, has become a well-read man! I shall accept it as such, at any rate, and I only wish it were more true in that intimation. The interval seems a very great one, as you look at it there; but it has passed rapidly; and so it will have done with you when, forty years hence, you look back, if you do look back, to this afternoon and to this anniversary.

I have the strongest desire for you all, such as every parent has for his own children, that these years which are before you shall be years of great happiness. They may be; and I trust they will be. I remember, when a little boy, people used to say to me sometimes that I was having the happiest years of my life. I did not believe it then, and I have believed it less and less ever since. It is not so. Happier years come later in life. I suspect the happiest years of all, with those who live wisely, are the last years; and that a childhood which has had a great deal of cloud over it, with a great deal of shower, oftentimes comes to an afternoon as radiant and as lovely as this has been, and to an evening as tranquil and superb as we hope this evening is to be. Every person has a right, and is under obligation, to live with reference to a happy life here, and to a happier life hereafter. We are not to think about a happiness to come by and by, merely, and let the present go with no experience of it. We are to try to glorify God by being happy here—as these vines and flowers glorify

Him by being verdurous and charming in their hues and fragrance. The question is, therefore, a very important one for every person—how that happiness is to be secured? It was the thought of you, in connection with that question, which led me, as much as anything, to desire to be here with you a few minutes this afternoon.

We hear it said oftentimes, and said truly, that faith in Christ, and in His Gospel, is the condition of all true happiness on earth; but we sometimes, I think, make too great a mystery of that faith. It is simply affectionate and praising confidence. You know what happiness such confidence gives. For instance, you are lost, as some of you may have been lost in the woods this summer, when perhaps you had been out on a picnic and had lost your way. When you see a guide approaching whom you know, and whom you can trust, what perfect relief there is to your spirit! Possibly you have been lost at some time in the streets of the city. I do not know whether any of you are subject to that peculiar trick of the eye which afflicts me sometimes, when I get everything on the wrong side of the street. I remember that in one of the cities of Europe—the beautiful city of Florence,—the omnibus taking me from station to hotel made a sudden turn which I did not recognize, and when I got out of it everything was wrong; the sun rose in the west, and set in the east; the river Arno was running right from the Mediterranean toward the Apennines; and I could not make anything seem right in the points of the compass. I never have found it right, so far as that city is concerned; and if I now think of anything in Florence as being on the south side of the Arno I know that it is on the north side, and so rectify my impression by my judgment. Some of you may have been lost in the city in that way, perhaps, when everything has seemed unfamiliar and strange to you. Then, if you saw a friend, your confidence in him, and in his willingness to guide you, what a full-brimmed source it was of joy and gladness! You could shout for joy, and leap and dance; whether you had had any lessons in dancing or not, you danced on the pavement, in glad anticipation of the guidance which he could give. It is just so when a physician comes, when we are feeling wretchedly ill, and know that he will give us something to help us. It is so when we are perplexed and curious about some subject, and a person comes who will certainly be able to give us the needed information.

That is confidence. Now, confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ, in Himself, and His wonderful work, and in His promises—that is Faith. Do not make a mystery about it. There is nothing mysterious in its nature. It is the simplest thing in the world—a full heart-felt confiding in the Lord Jesus Christ, in His character and redemption, in His directions, and in His promises. It is that which gives relief and gladness. It is that out of which comes a beautiful, noble, and holy life. Then you know that you are a child of God, since you are a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ; and you have the celestial gates open before you, because this simple affectionate confidence in Him is that which God asks in order that we may attain eternal life. That faith is like the wing of

the bird. People say sometimes that there is a burden in faith. There is no more burden in faith than there is burden in the wing of the bird. The wing is not a weight, it is a means of ascending. So it is with the human spirit. Faith gives it wings, by which it soars into the vision and felicity of God Himself. That is always, therefore, the first thing. There never is any real happiness in this world—I do not care what the world may say, I do not care what knowledge and high position may do for one, I do not care what agreeable social circumstances there may be—there is no thorough happiness in this world, where there is no faith—faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in His word and work, in His precepts, and in His majestic promises.

Then, with that must come also the desire for usefulness to others. A child sometimes thinks, "Why, I am to receive, and not to give!" Well, that is true, as far as the very beginning of childhood is concerned, and the earliest infantile years. But, there is no little child here so young that he or she cannot begin to be useful to others, and in that way to gain happiness. You know that, as well as I do. I will show you that you know it. You find, for example, when you give your gift at Christmas or at New Year's—particularly if it is something which you have made yourself, or if it is something which you have saved money for, which otherwise you might have spent upon yourself—that while you give happiness by the gift, you *gain* happiness also. It is very sweet to you to think that you have been useful to another—to father, mother, brother, or sister, or even to a stranger. If a stranger asks you on the street where a particular house is, and you tell him, and then go with him a few steps in order to show him, you are happier for that small act all the day long—more happy than if some benefit had been conferred upon you. Usefulness is the real spring of enjoyment. That is one secret of what the Master meant when he said, "He who will lose his life for my sake, shall find it." We gain by giving. If we are all the time receiving, and not giving out, we get to be like one of these stagnant ponds into which waters are running, but from which waters are not going forth, and which so become foul and pestilential. There is nobody so unhappy as a thoroughly selfish person; because, as the Master said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." We find happiness in every act of kindness that we do to others. Usefulness, united with faith in the Master, is the essential secret of a happy life.

In order that we may have this faith, this usefulness, and the happiness which comes from it, we need to be very intimate with God in prayer. Children sometimes think that prayer is only the utterance of the Minister in the pulpit; or that it is the utterance of some great congregation in a hymn of prayer. But, prayer is just the expression of a child's desire to God. We all are children before God; and we want to be perfectly confiding, perfectly simple, in our prayer. When you go to your father or mother, for instance, because you want a particular gift, or a particular indulgence of some kind not harmful to you, you do not go and make a speech; you do not feel that you need to write your request

beforehand; but you go and speak, right out of your childish lips, the request; you *look* the prayer, for the prayer may be in your eye as much as on your lips; it may be in your eager hand, just as much as it is in the eye or on the lip. That is prayer—prayer to a parent, or to a friend, for some present good. Now, that is equally prayer to God. You come to Him at evening and at morning to ask Him for that which you need, for that which He sees that you need; and if you do this He will answer, and you will have this confidence of the heart, and the happiness which comes from usefulness, constantly present in your life. Praying is not a thing that can be done once for all the day, or once for all the week, any more than you can eat your bread for a week to come to-morrow morning. But, it is "Give us this day our daily bread." We must make *daily* petitions to God; and a child-like, simple, confiding, and heart-felt request will always bring the gift we need—if not always the gift we seek. People sometimes get much richer blessings in answer to prayer than they anticipate, even when these were not what they sought. You have heard the story of the Indian climbing the mountain in South America, who being in danger of slipping grasped a bush and pulled it up? The bush yielded in his hand, and did not hold him; but he was caught a little lower down; and the bush, being uprooted, disclosed a mine of silver beneath. It is often very much so with prayer. We do not get exactly what we ask, but we get richer blessings in place of it. The more familiar we are with God, the more intimate we are with Him who came to show Himself to us in the person of His Son Jesus Christ, the more complete the joy we shall have in confidence in Him, and in the happiness born of conscious usefulness to others.

I did not mean to speak five minutes, where I have spoken perhaps fifteen. All that I wish to say at the end is just this: that if, forty years hence, any of you happen to remember this occasion, and happen to remember these words which I have spoken, if you will look back upon your life, having accepted the words and tried to follow them day by day, you will, every one of you, say, "He told us exactly the truth! He told us what he had found in his own experience, in a degree, to be true; and what he knew to be true from the experience of others, and from the teaching of God's word and Spirit. He told us the way to Happiness; and our life has been as bright and beautiful as it has been, because we have followed along that line which he pointed out!"

I thank you again, with all my heart, for this beautiful bronze which you have given me, and for all the affectionate thought and impulse which are expressed by it. I do not know that I *can* think that in giving me this your enjoyment has been greater than mine in receiving it, for then it would pass all reasonable bounds! But I take it as lovingly as it is offered, and we shall together rejoice in it.

I hope that, by and by, when all these earthly days are ended, and we are gone hence, the youngest of us as well as the oldest, we shall be joined in the perfect blessedness wrought by the vision of perfect faith, in that

celestial City, where the day never ends, where storms never beat, where flowers never fade, and where we shall see our Master face to face, and be with Him forever!

The following Hymn was then sung:—

JERUSALEM THE GOLDEN.

Jerusalem the Golden!
  With milk and honey blest;
Beneath thy contemplation
  Sink heart and voice oppressed.
I know not, O! I know not,
  What social joys are there;
What radiancy of glory,
  What light beyond compare.

They stand, those halls of Sion,
  All jubilant with song,
And bright with many an angel,
  And all the martyr throng.
The Prince is ever in them,
  The day-light is serene;
The pastures of the blessed
  Are decked in glorious sheen.

There is the throne of David;
  And there from care released,
The song of them that triumph,
  The shout of them that feast;
And they, who with their Leader
  Have conquered in the fight,
Forever and forever
  Are clad in robes of white.

O sweet and blessed country,
  The home of God's elect!
O sweet and blessed country,
  That eager hearts expect!
Jesus, in mercy bring us
  To that dear land of rest;
Who art, with God the Father,
  And Spirit, ever blest. *Amen.*

PRAYER WAS THEN OFFERED BY DR. STORRS.

Almighty God, most merciful Father, who art the Author of our life, and the Giver of every good and perfect gift: we bless Thee for this hour of happiness, of fellowship with one another, of common praise, and of common supplication. We thank Thee for the life and health of those who are gathered as pupils in these Sunday-schools; that they have been preserved thus far from

dangers seen and unseen, and guided in safety on their way in life. We thank Thee for the tidings, great, and beautiful, and gracious, which come to them afresh with every Lord's day, of the love of Him who is the Lord of glory, but who was Himself a babe in Bethlehem, and a child in Nazareth. We bless Thee that Thou hast given the spirit of love, and of consecration, the spirit of wisdom and faith and hope, unto those to whom is committed the instruction of those who come to receive it from them,—that they are permitted to teach others out of the treasures of their experience. In that experience may they themselves be ever enriched. In their vision of the truth may they be illumined, as they bring the light of wisdom which they have unto those who are committed in part to their care. May Thy blessing be upon all who are associated in these schools as officers and teachers; and upon all who are taught in them, that every one may receive the Divine instruction into a rejoicing heart, into an intelligent mind, with confiding faith, with gladness and with praise. May the life of God, coming by the power of the Holy Ghost, be in each of these hearts—the life within the life to each of those who here guide and teach, and to each of those who receive their instruction.

We bless and praise Thee, our Heavenly Father, for all that Thou hast done for this Church in the years that are past; especially now for those who have been baptized into it, and who have then been received to its communion; who have been taught in its schools, and who have afterward come to take office in these schools upon themselves, and to stand in their turn in places of influence and of power. And now, most merciful Father, we commend to Thee this church with which we are so tenderly and sacredly associated, and pray that Thy blessing may rest upon it in all time to come, even as in the time past, and yet more abundantly. We pray that Thy blessing may rest upon every household represented before Thee here; and that in each one, parents and children may be found walking together, seeking the heavenly Home, by the only celestial path. And at last, when our life on earth is ended, gather us there, we pray Thee, in the fellowship of the saints, at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, in the beauty, felicity and praise of Paradise. And, unto the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, will we give the glory evermore!

Hear us in this our prayer, accept us in our confession of sin, and our entreaty for Thy forgiveness, and grant us all the spiritual gifts which it is Thine alone to bestow, for the sake of Him who loved us, who gave Himself for us, and who hath taught us to pray, saying,—

Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgíve us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. *Amen.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all, evermore. *Amen.*

PUBLIC RECEPTION.

The Committee of gentlemen having charge of the Reception given to Dr. and Mrs Storrs on the evening of November 18th, was as follows, representing the Trustees, the Officers of the church, and the Young People's Association :—

Mr. Walter T. Hatch,
Mr. Franklin Woodruff,
Mr. James P. Wallace,
Mr. George P. Stockwell,
Mr. Thomas E. Stillman,
Mr. Joseph E. Brown,
Mr. Joseph Haslehurst,
Mr. Abbott L. Dow,
Mr. S. B. Chittenden, Jr.,
Mr. Arthur M. Hatch,
Mr. Henry S. Woodruff.

At the request of the Committee, many ladies and gentlemen of the congregation took part in superintending and conducting the Reception, and many young gentlemen gave efficient service as ushers.

Not only the members of the church and congregation of the Church of the Pilgrims, but a very large number of distinguished citizens of Brooklyn and New York, with many eminent clergymen of the different Protestant communions in either city, were in attendance at the Reception, and had the opportunity to express personally their regard and their congratulations to the Pastor and his wife. After they had done so, in a procession constantly and rapidly passing for an hour and a half, a brief religious service was held in the church, as follows :

TE DEUM, BY THE CHOIR.

Prayer, by Rev. George F. Pentecost, D.D.

O Thou most gracious, ever blessed and beloved Head of the Church : we are gathered in this Thy sanctuary to-night to do honor to Thy servant, all of whose honor cometh from Thee ! We beseech Thee therefore that Thy Presence may abide with us, and may sanctify all the doings of the hour which is past, and all the doings of the hour which is now with us. Gracious Lord, for forty years Thou hast dwelt here with Thy servant, Thou hast upheld his hands, and hast made his ministry strong. Out of all these years there have come up constant praises to Thee, through the testimony of his lips, and in the ministry of his life, whilst Thou hast shown ever anew Thine eternal love and faithfulness to Thy people.

O gracious Lord, whilst we thank Thee that Thou hast raised up and strengthened the man who hath borne Thy message, and who hath stood in Thy stead before this people of God, we thank Thee also that Thou hast made us to

know Thine own presence, behind all this ministry, and in the midst of this teaching. We thank Thee, that to-night the hearts of this people are bound up in him whom Thou hast made their overseer for Thee, because he hath led them one by one unto the knowledge of Thee, their Saviour and their Lord. We thank Thee for the honor which comes to him from this city, whose growth and development he has not only seen, but, to whatsoever is best in them, has contributed so largely of his own life and of his own gifts. We pray Thee that the institutions which he hath builded here may abide through the generations to come; and though it was not given to him to build on another man's foundation, we thank Thee that it hath been given him to lay foundations so broad, so deep, and so abiding, that generations to come may build upon them, and themselves in turn be built upon them, through those who shall come after him in the ministry of the Gospel of the Son of God.

We pray Thee that whilst we are honoring Thy servant to-night, our hearts may be drawn out in abundant joy at the thought of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, having loved His own, loves them to the end; and that a deepening spirit of loyalty to the Truth, which has been steadily preached from this pulpit, of loyalty to the Word of God in all its teachings, of loyalty to the Church of God, and to the Name of Jesus Christ, may be strengthened in the hearts of all whose memories are here quickened to recall the messages of these forty years, and to review the ministrations of this long life in the midst of them.

We invoke Thy Divine blessing upon the reverend head of Thy servant. Make his remaining days yet more abundant in blessing to himself, and more abundant in blessing to his people, to the city, to the whole land and to the world, than Thou hast made those to be in the years which are gone. We thank Thee that Thou hast not only permitted him to live and to speak in the midst of this Thy people, but hast also given him opportunity to put into permanent form such instruction and wisdom, and such gathered stores of learning, that generations to come, on both sides of the sea, shall be enriched by the treasures which Thou hadst committed to his care. We pray for Thy blessing upon all who are near and dear to him. Fill his hands with blessing. Fill his heart, and his household, with blessing. Pour out blessings upon his children, and upon his grandchildren. Raise up to come after him successive generations of spiritual men, who shall take the torch when he lays it down, and shall steadfastly maintain the doctrine and truth of the Son of God, in this place where he has nobly and manfully stood for so many years.

May the blessing of God rest upon this great church, which has been gathered by hundreds, and even by thousands, under his ministry. Multiply the strength here of all believers. Increase their beneficence, and intensify their spiritual faith. May this church be still the mother of many charities, which shall be established and reproduced throughout the length and breadth of this city. May it be ever henceforth a great and pulsing centre of spiritual life, sending forth continual blessing into every ward and precinct of the town.

Bless, we beseech Thee, this waiting congregation. May we all go hence, saying: "It was good for us to go up to the house of the Lord! It was good for us to honor, in Christ's name, one of the Lord's anointed servants! It was good for us to have our memories refreshed by the suggestions of his long ministry! It was good for us to have our hearts thrilled by the thought that after nearly two thousand years from His coming to the world Jesus is mightier to-day, His Gospel more powerful, the Holy Ghost more wide and effective in His operation, in all the world, than they were at the beginning." May these blessed thoughts kindle in our hearts ever fresh and blessed hopes! May they quicken in our souls new enthusiasm, and nerve us for the fight that is always before us, in this day when the truth is being denied, and when the god of this world is marshalling his forces for tremendous assault upon the Church of God, and upon the Word. Strengthen every arm, nerve every heart, sanctify every life, upon which hath been named the Name of Jesus Christ; and may these thousands of witnesses gathered to-night to do honor to Thy servant, and to Thee through him, go from this place with a stronger purpose than ever before to give glory in all their work and life to the name of Jesus Christ, the Master, the Saviour, the Lord of us all. We ask it all for His name's sake. *Amen.*

Dr. Storrs then said: I thank you all, my dear Friends; I cordially thank every one of you; not only in my own behalf, but in behalf of her who has been most intimately associated with me in all my years in this church of Christ, and on behalf of our children, for the great and beautiful honor which you have done us this evening. I most fervently echo the prayer that the blessing of the Most High may abide upon you all!

I will ask you now to unite in singing the Doxology; after which I will ask the Reverend Dr. Behrends, who is present with us, to pronounce the Benediction. There will then be another opportunity for social intercourse, in the Lecture-room.

The vast congregation then rose and joined in singing

The Doxology.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye Heavenly Host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Rev. Dr. A. J. F. Behrends pronounced

The Benediction.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be and abide with you all, evermore! *Amen.*

PRESENTATION OF SILVER-PLATE, BY THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION.

The following correspondence will at once explain itself:—

BROOKLYN, November 16th, 1886.

DEAR DOCTOR STORRS:—As President of the Young People's Association of our church, the pleasant duty devolves upon me of sending the accompanying token of its remembrance to Mrs. Storrs and yourself, on the fortieth anniversary of your settlement among us, which is to be celebrated on the 18th inst.

Of the appropriateness and of your appreciation of a gift from the younger element of the church, we feel assured, knowing as we do how much and how tenderly this element has been in your thoughts, and feeling greatly indebted to you for many worthy precepts taught, and for the example of noble character which has been before us for such a long time.

For the years—and we trust they may be many—that are to come, we wish both for you and your good wife a continuance of happiness most abundant; and we offer you our best efforts, in order that, still under your guidance and leadership, from the young people of to-day may be built up the Church of the Pilgrims of the future.

With renewed assurances of our best wishes, I remain, as ever,

Faithfully yours,

HENRY S. WOODRUFF,
For the Young People's Association.

R. S. STORRS, D.D., LL.D.

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80 PIERREPONT STREET,
BROOKLYN, November 17th, 1886.

DEAR FRIEND:—Nothing could have been more delightful to Mrs. Storrs and myself than a testimonial of the affectionate attachment of those who are united in the Young People's Association of the Church of the Pilgrims.

The superb gift which has come from them, through you, this evening, elegant and rich as it is in itself, is yet more dear and beautiful to us as representing the loving regard from which it comes. It will be a witness of this to our children's children, and will show them how happy we have been and are in possessing the confidence and affectionate honor of those who have known us from their childhood.

Most of all we thank you for the assurance of your best efforts to build up on its present foundations the Church of the Pilgrims of the future. They who have long been active in it must ere long, one by one, pass away. It is a thought full of gladness to each of us, not only that we shall be still affectionately remembered by you all in coming years, but that the church, which has been so

noble and beautiful a Christian Home for all of us, will be sustained, and still further enriched, in its faith, its spirit, and its work, by those who come after us.

With warmest love, and heartiest thanks, to all who have been associated with you in this most beautiful act and gift, we are

Ever affectionately yours,

R. S. AND M. E. STORRS.

MR. H. S. WOODRUFF,
President of Young People's Association.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE HARVARD CHURCH, BROOKLINE, MASS.

Dr. Storrs was called in his youth from the Harvard Church in Brookline, Mass., to become the Pastor of the Church of the Pilgrims. It was felt by the latter church that the church which he had early left, and to which, with his wife, he had always remained most affectionately attached, should be specially invited to participate in the services connected with the celebration of the completion of his forty years' pastorate in Brooklyn. The following letter was therefore addresssd to the Harvard Church by a Committee consisting of gentlemen, still remaining in the Church of the Pilgrims, who were active in the original call to Dr. Storrs, in 1846 :—

BROOKLYN, N. Y., November 6, 1886.

To the Pastor, Officers, and Members of the Harvard Church, Brookline, Mass.:—

REVEREND AND BELOVED :—In July, 1846, the Church of the Pilgrims in this city called to its pastorate one who had been your beloved minister for less than a year. Such a call, to one who had so recently been happily settled, was unusual, and would have been inexcusable except for the circumstances in which this church was then placed, with great openings set before it, while apparently unable to unite in cordial harmony on any other person known to it as its Pastor-elect. He who was then your Minister felt constrained by convictions of duty to accept our call ; and in God's good providence he has remained with us from November, 1846, to the present time, never forgetting, as he has often assured us, the church and parish of his first care, though always happy in the home and the work which he has found here. We propose to celebrate the completion of his fortieth year in the pastorate of this church, without any elaborate or complicated arrangements, to which he is averse, by a social reunion of the congregation at the church on the evening of Thursday, November 18th ; and it would be a great pleasure to us, as well as to our Pastor, if we might welcome on that occasion to our hospitality some of your number. We rejoice with you, always, in the great and beautiful prosperity which God has given to your church, as to

ours, in this long course of years. We pray that your whole history as a church may be full of Christian happiness, usefulness, and enlarging power. And we are, dear brethren, on behalf of the Church of the Pilgrims, sincerely and affectionately yours, in the faith and service of Christ,

S. B. Chittenden,
Walter T. Hatch,
C. L. Mitchell,
H. D. Sharpe,
A. Woodruff,
S. F. Phelps,
C. B. Aborn,

} Members of the Church of the Pilgrims in 1846 and 1886.

To the above letter the following reply was received from the Harvard Church, and the Reception Committee had the very great pleasure of welcoming several representatives of that church on the evening of the 18th :—

Brookline, Mass., November 13, 1886.

To the Officers and Members of the Church of the Pilgrims, Brooklyn, N. Y.:—

Dear Brethren:—In reply to a letter addressed to us, signed by members of your church who were in its fellowship in the year 1846, when the Rev. Dr. Storrs was called to its ministry, we beg to assure you of our appreciation of the privilege of being allowed to be represented, by several esteemed brethren from the Harvard Church, at your meeting on November 18th.

The Harvard Church regards itself as a kind of preface to the volume containing the records of the ministry of your beloved Pastor.

But four of those who called him to his first brief pastorate remain; they, however, represent the general feeling of warm regard which has always been, and is, entertained toward Dr. Storrs in this church. If with us the brilliant dawn was soon beclouded, and the daylight since has never equalled it in promise and splendor, yet the light has ever shone through the clouds that have sometimes hovered over us, and we have had our fair share of sunshine.

The new and beautiful structure, one of the most admired for its architectural purity in all New England, which has superseded the less commodious building to which your Pastor was called, has on several occasions been adorned and beautified by his presence. We have followed his history with an interest which could hardly belong to others outside your own fellowship. We have rejoiced in his goodness and greatness. We have had intelligence enough to appreciate the brilliant gifts with which he has been endowed, the splendid culture by which he has doubled the talents which the Master entrusted to him, and have gloried in the added greatness which his presence has often given to great occasions in the history of the Congregational churches in our land.

To few churches does it belong to have a ministry so singularly rich in eloquence and spiritual power, continued through so long a period. To very few

Ministers is given the benediction of a people, so abundantly able to appreciate through long years so high an order of ministry.

In an age when sensationalism has so often been substituted for the old honest Christian thinking, with which our churches were in former days enriched in intelligence and fortified in the faith, your Pastor has stood before the churches as an illustration of a man who believed that the truths of Scripture, expounded with adequate intelligence, learning, and ability, were all-sufficient for the deepest needs of the heart of man. It is true that language, as used by him, has seemed to contain new force, and to be clad in new beauty. The old truths, as he gave them utterance, have seemed to have a subtle charm of newness about them. He has touched nothing which he has not adorned. In this respect he has been in a position of advantage to which few, if any, could attain.

We join our congratulations with yours, that on the completion of his fortieth year of pastorate in your church, he is still in the fullness of his strength, "his eye not dim, nor his natural force abated"; and we unite with you, fervently and sincerely, in the prayer that there may yet remain for him and for you, many years of happy fellowship and Christian usefulness in the Church militant here on earth, and that, when the close of this present opportunity of service shall come, the great word of approval may be heard from His lips who alone has the right and power to give it: "Well done, good and faithful servants; enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

Signed, in behalf of the Harvard Church,

REUEN THOMAS, Pastor.

CHARLES W. SCUDDER,
ALICIA H. SCUDDER,
MOSES WITHINGTON,
SAMUEL A. ROBINSON,
} Members of the Church in 1846.

"NOW UNTO HIM THAT IS ABLE TO DO EXCEEDING ABUNDANTLY, ABOVE ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK, ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKETH IN US, UNTO HIM BE GLORY IN THE CHURCH, BY CHRIST JESUS, THROUGHOUT ALL AGES, WORLD WITHOUT END! AMEN."

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